LITTLE LAYS FOR LITTLE FOLK



GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS.

LITTLE LAYS

FOR

LITTLE FOLK.

RICHARD CLAY
LONDON



LITTLE LAYS FOR LITTLE FOLK

SELECTED BY

JOHN G. WATTS.

ILLUSTRATED

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GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS.

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PREFACE.

An attempt has here been made to bring together a collection of Poems, lyrical and descriptive, such as Children are known really to delight in, and such as Parents may with perfect confidence offer. Care has been taken to keep it simple in character, sound in moral, and diversified in subject.

Among the Authors laid under contribution many honoured names will be found. With regard to the several pieces from the pen of the Editor, it is but just to state that they are included at the especial request of the projectors.

With a view to rendering the book still more acceptable, Art has been enlisted at considerable cost, and every

page illustrated by some able hand. Much time and care have been expended in the engraving of the pictures, and, indeed, nothing left undone which was thought at all calculated to make this volume what those most concerned in its success are ambitious it should prove — a really acceptable offering to the home circle.

It may be well to add, that the whole of the Illustrations have been arranged and engraved under the entire direction of MR. JAMES D. COOPER.

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LITTLE LAYS

FOR LITTLE FOLK.



INNOCENT CHILD

AND SNOW-WHITE FLOWER!

INNOCENT child and snow-white flower!
Well are ye paired in your opening hour.
Thus should the pure and the lovely meet,
Stainless with stainless, and sweet with sweet.

White as those leaves just blown apart,
Are the opening folds of thy own young heart;
Guilty passion and cankering care
Never have left their traces there.

THE INNOCENT CHILD.

Artless one! though thou gazest now
O'er the white blossoms with earnest brow,
Soon will it tire thy childish eye;
Fair as it is, thou wilt throw it by.

Throw it aside in thy weary hour,
Throw to the ground the fair white flower;
Yet, as thy tender years depart,
Keep that white and innocent heart.







THE SPRING WALK.

We had a pleasant walk to-day
Over the meadows and far away,
Across the bridge by the water-mill,
By the woodside, and up the hill;
And if you listen to what I say,
I'll tell you what we saw to-day.



THE SPRING WALK.

Amid a hedge, where the first leaves
Were peeping from their sheaths so sly,
We saw four eggs within a nest,
And they were blue as a summer sky.

An elder-branch dipp'd in the brook;
We wonder'd why it moved, and found
A silken-hair'd smooth water-rat
Nibbling, and swimming round and round.

Where daisies open'd to the sun,
In a broad meadow, green and white,
The lambs were racing eagerly—
We never saw a prettier sight.

We saw upon the shady banks
Long rows of golden flowers shine,
And first mistook for buttercups
The star-shaped yellow celandine.

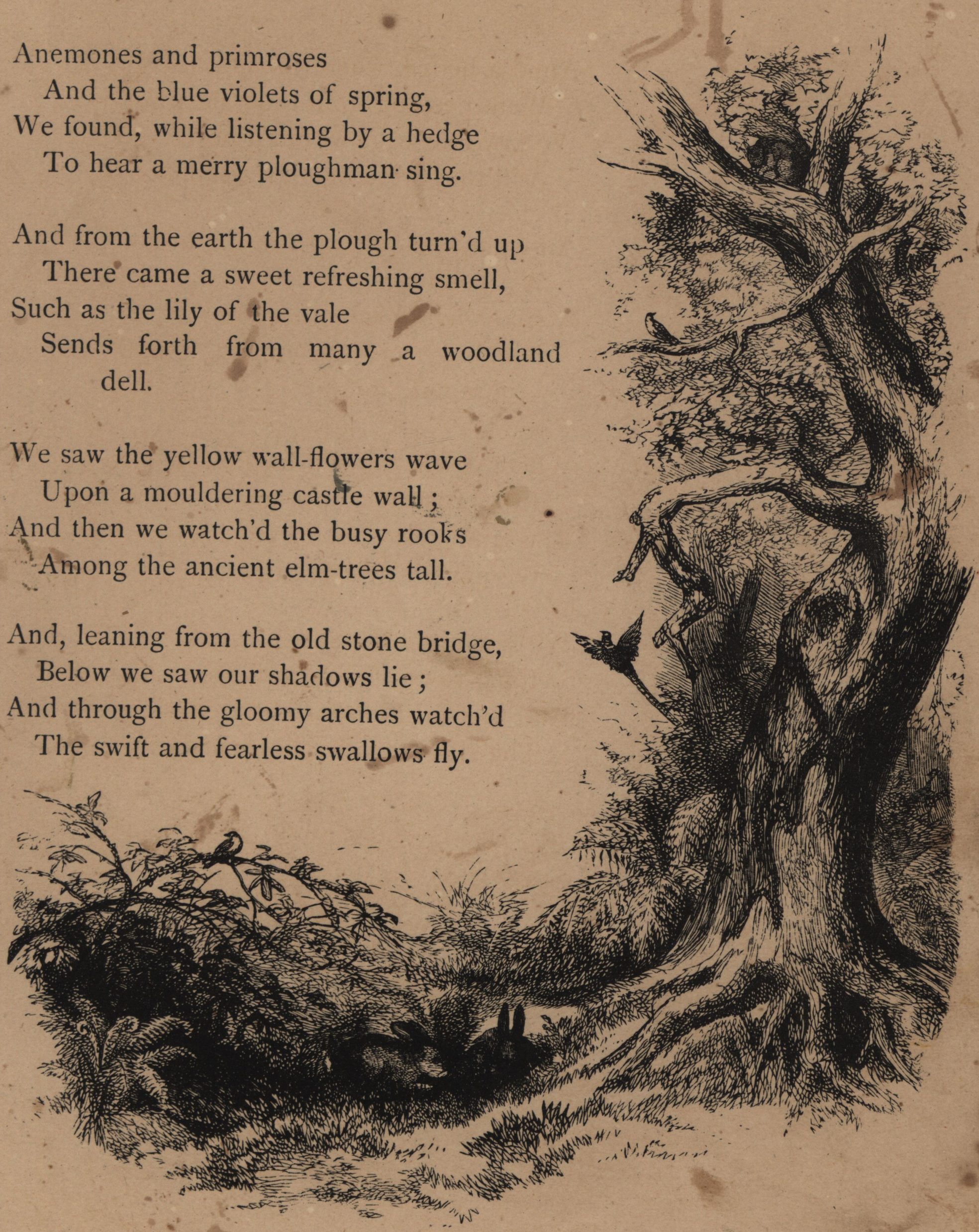
THE SPRING WALK.

Anemones and primroses
And the blue violets of spring,
We found, while listening by a hedge
To hear a merry ploughman sing.

And from the earth the plough turn'd up
There came a sweet refreshing smell,
Such as the lily of the vale
Sends forth from many a woodland dell.

We saw the yellow wall-flowers wave
Upon a mouldering castle wall;
And then we watch'd the busy rooks
Among the ancient elm-trees tall.

And, leaning from the old stone bridge,
Below we saw our shadows lie;
And through the gloomy arches watch'd
The swift and fearless swallows fly.



THE SPRING WALK.

We heard the speckle-breasted lark
  As it sang somewhere out of sight,
And tried to find it, but the sky
  Was fill'd with clouds of dazzling light.

We saw young rabbits near the wood,
  And heard a pheasant's wings go "whirr;"
And then we saw a squirrel leap
  From an old oak-tree to a fir.

We came back by the village fields,
  A pleasant walk it was across 'em,
For all behind the houses lay
  The orchards red and white with blossom.

Were I to tell you all we saw,
  I'm sure that it would take me hours;
For the whole landscape was alive
  With bees, and birds, and buds, and flowers.



CATCHING PRAWNS.

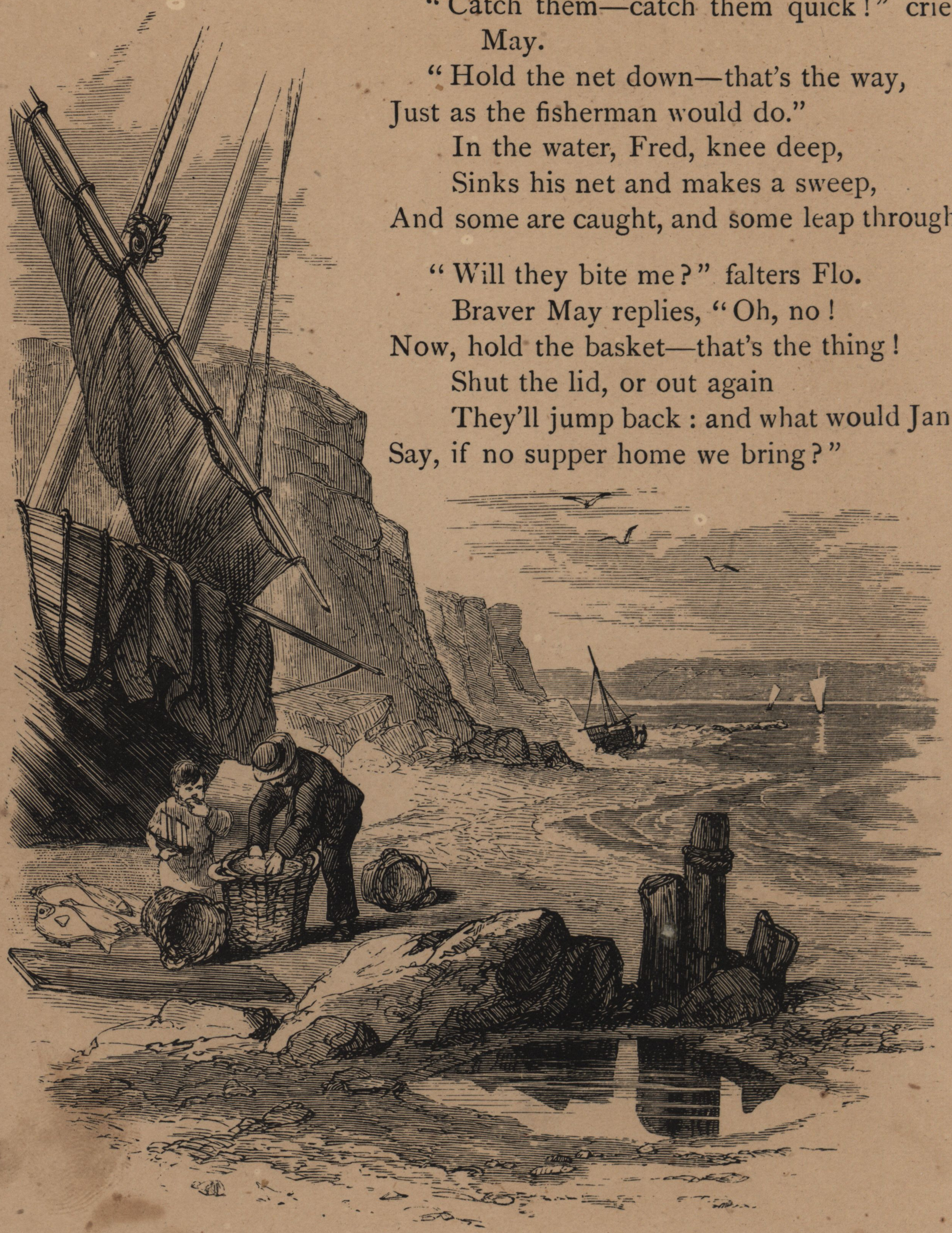
ALL among the slippery rocks,
Wetting shoes and spoiling frocks,
See Fred, and May, and little Flo!
Net in hand, they cunning look
In each sea-weed hidden nook,
And watch the prawns dart to and fro.



CATCHING PRAWNS.

"Catch them—catch them quick!" cries
May.
"Hold the net down—that's the way,
Just as the fisherman would do."
In the water, Fred, knee deep,
Sinks his net and makes a sweep,
And some are caught, and some leap through.

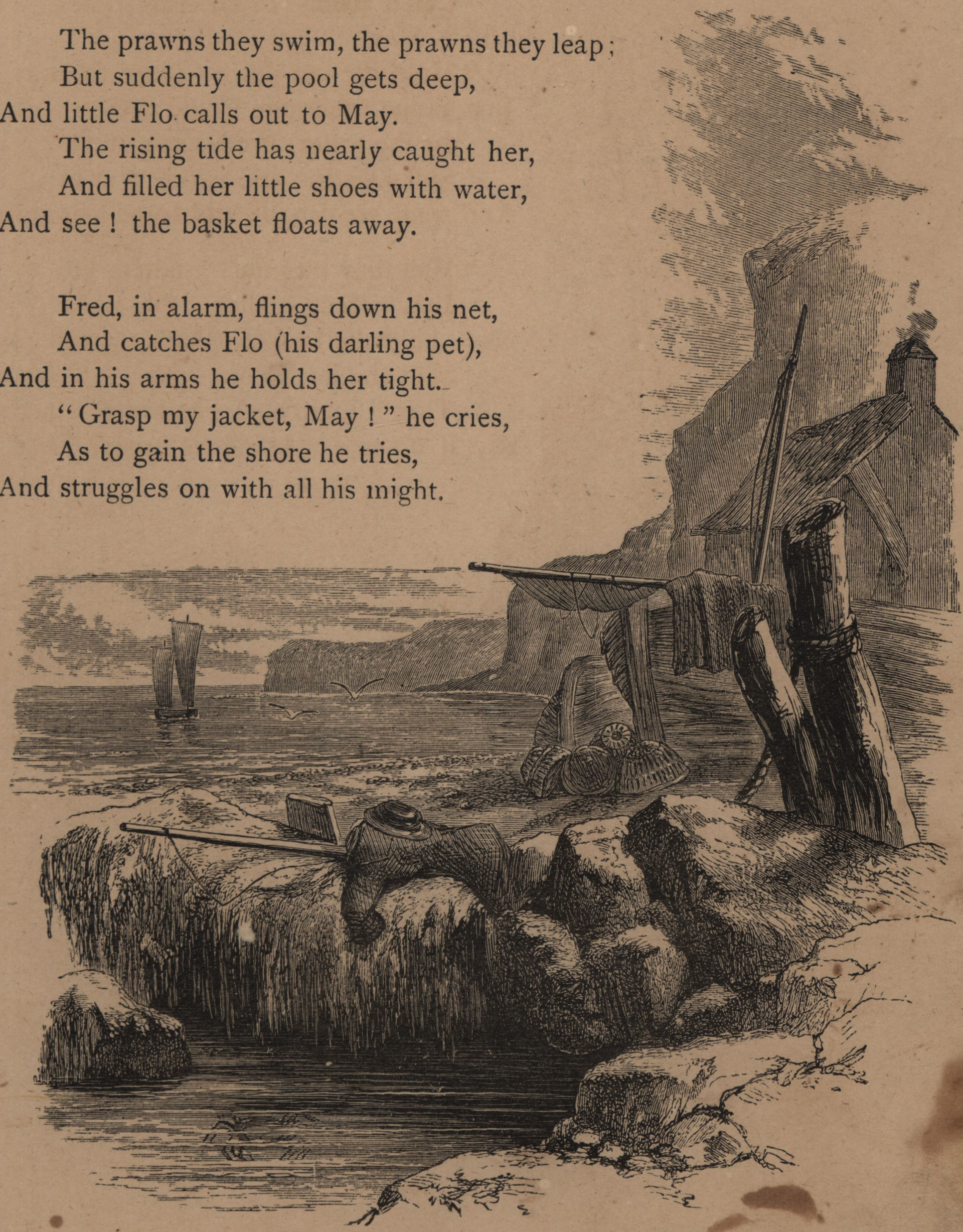
"Will they bite me?" falters Flo.
Braver May replies, "Oh, no!
Now, hold the basket—that's the thing!
Shut the lid, or out again
They'll jump back: and what would Jane
Say, if no supper home we bring?"



CATCHING PRAWNS.

The prawns they swim, the prawns they leap;
But suddenly the pool gets deep,
And little Flo calls out to May.
The rising tide has nearly caught her,
And filled her little shoes with water,
And see! the basket floats away.

Fred, in alarm, flings down his net,
And catches Flo (his darling pet),
And in his arms he holds her tight.
"Grasp my jacket, May!" he cries,
As to gain the shore he tries,
And struggles on with all his might.

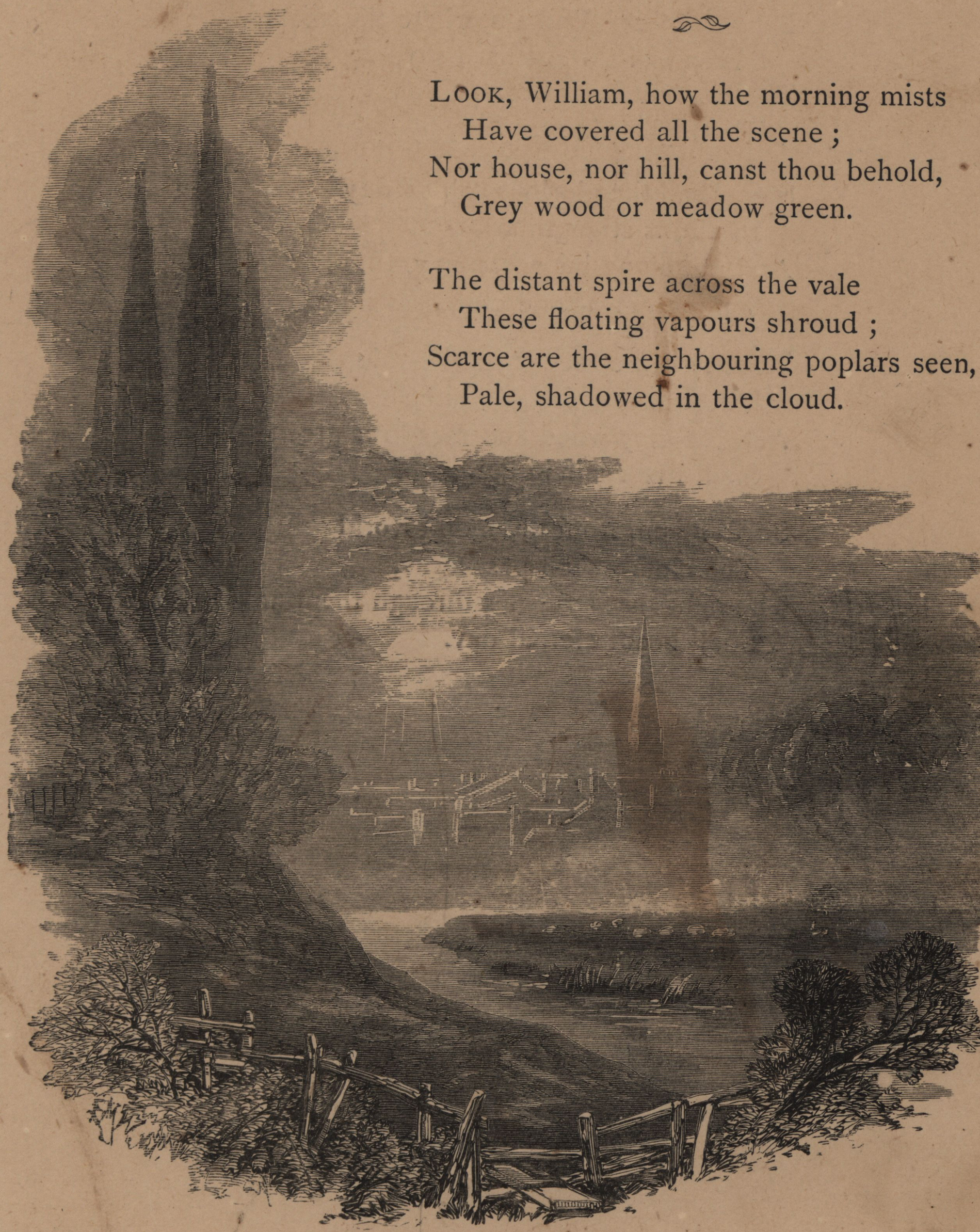


CATCHING PRAWNS.

Wet—as wet as wet can be—
Stand the little shivering three,
No prawns, no basket, and no net.
Long, I think, 'twill be ere they
Are allowed to go and play
At catching prawns, and getting wet.



THE MORNING MIST.



Look, William, how the morning mists
Have covered all the scene ;
Nor house, nor hill, canst thou behold,
Grey wood or meadow green.

The distant spire across the vale
These floating vapours shroud ;
Scarce are the neighbouring poplars seen,
Pale, shadowed in the cloud.

THE MORNING MIST.

But seest thou, William, where the mists
  Sweep o'er the southern sky,
The dim effulgence of the sun
  That lights them as they fly?

Soon shall the glorious orb of day
  In all his strength arise,
And roll along his azure way,
  Through clear and cloudless skies.

Then shall we see across the vale
  The village spire so white,
And the grey wood and meadows green
  Shall live again in light.

So, William, from the moral world
  The clouds shall pass away,
The light that struggles through them now
  Shall beam eternal day.



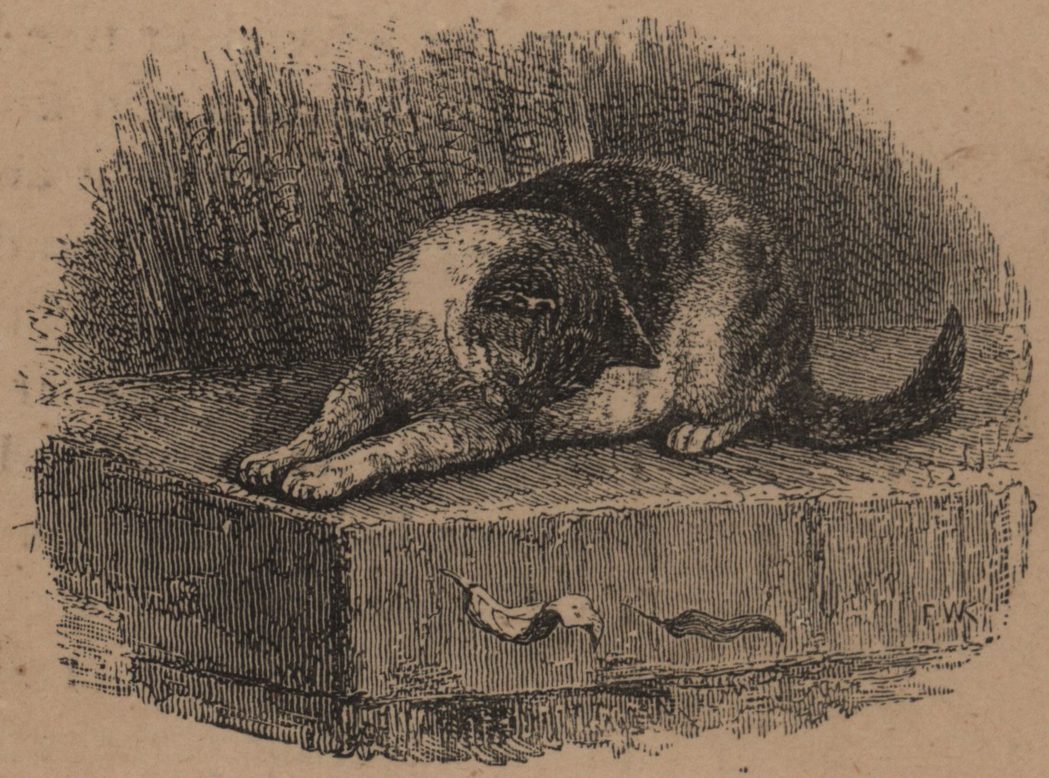


THE KITTEN AND FALLING LEAVES.

See the Kitten on the wall,
Sporting with the leaves that fall,
Withered leaves —one—two—and three—
From the lofty elder tree !
Through the calm and frosty air
Of this morning bright and fair,
Eddying round and round they sink
Softly, slowly : one might think,
From the motions that are made,
Every little leaf conveyed
Sylph or Fairy hither tending,
To this lower world descending,
Each invisible and mute,
In his wavering parachute.

—But the Kitten, how she starts,
Crouches, stretches, paws, and darts!
First at one, and then its fellow,
Just as light and just as yellow;
There are many now—now one—
Now they stop and there are none:
What intenseness of desire
In her upward eye of fire!

With a tiger-leap half-way
Now she meets the coming prey,
Lets it go as fast, and then
Has it in her power again:
Now she works with three or four,
Like an Indian conjuror;
Quick as he in feats of art,
Far beyond in joy of heart.
Were her antics played in the eye
Of a thousand standers-by,
Clapping hands with shouts and stare,
What would little Tabby care
For the plaudits of the crowd?
Over happy to be proud,
Over wealthy in the treasure
Of her own exceeding pleasure!



THE ENGLISH GIRL.



SPORTING on the village green,
The pretty English girl is seen ;
Or beside her cottage neat,
Knitting on the garden seat.

Now, within her humble door,
Sweeping clean her kitchen floor ;
While upon the wall, so white,
Hang her coppers, polish'd bright.

THE ENGLISH GIRL.

Mary never idle sits ;
She either sews, or spins, or knits ;
Hard she labours all the week,
With sparkling eye and rosy cheek.

And, on Sunday, Mary goes
Neatly dress'd, in decent clothes,
Says her prayers (a constant rule),
And hastens to the Sunday School.

Oh ! how good should we be found,
Who live on happy, English ground ;
Where rich and poor and wretched may
All learn to walk in Wisdom's way.





THE LITTLE SCARECROW.

SHE is up in yonder field,
Mid the new-sown corn ;
She'll be there until the eve,
She has been there since the morn.
O, the pretty little creature,
With her bright blue eye,
I heard ner noisy clapper,
And her scare-crow cry.

THE LITTLE SCARECROW.

I paused to mark the child—
  She was very fair and young ;
She told me she was six,
  With her merry little tongue.
In her hand she held her hat,
  Which the wild wind swayed ;
And purple were the feet
  Of the scare-crow maid.

More happy than a queen,
  Though scanty was her food,
The child that sang her song
  To that clapper-music rude.
This the maiden's simple lay,
  As she warbled in her nook,
Here clapping every day,
  I scare the robber-rook ! "





THE CHILD TO THE WAVES.

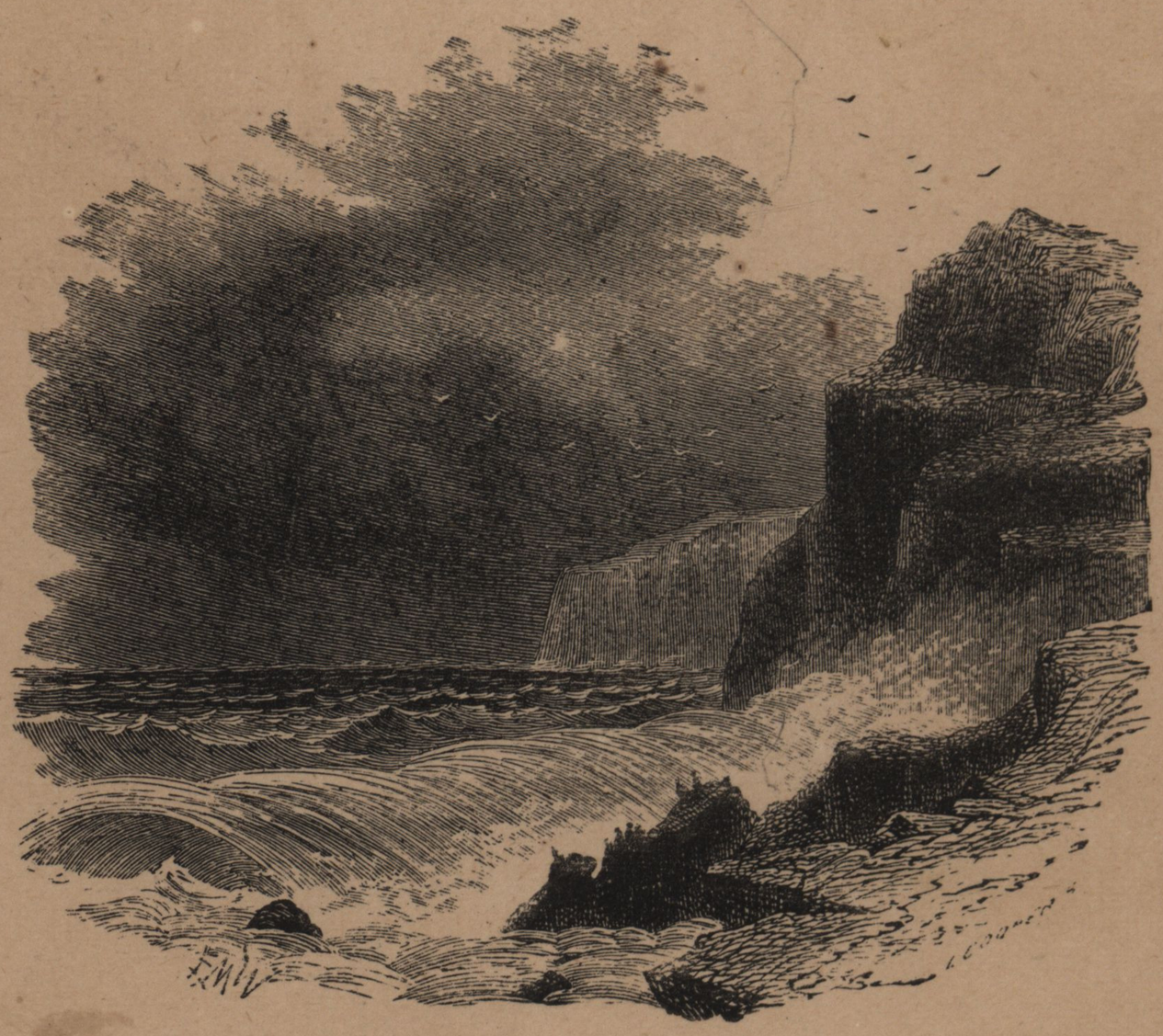
ROLL, bright green waves, across the bay,
Sweep up like racers fleet,
I love you, in your harmless play,
The diamond sparkle of your spray,
And then your swift retreat.

THE CHILD TO THE WAVES.

A pleasant sound it is to me,
When, on our rocky shore,
I hear you, children of the sea,
To your unchanging melody
Soft breaking evermore.

I love, when gentle breezes blow,
To see you dance, and view
The great white gulls a-sailing low,
While little boats rock to and fro,
The best of friends with you.

Roll, bright green waves ! but do not come
With angry crests, for then
I think of mother, sick at home,
And fear lest father from your foam
Should ne'er come back again.





BOYS' PLAY & GIRLS' PLAY.

"Now, let's have a game of play,
Lucy, Jane, and little May.
I will be a grisly bear,
Prowling here and prowling there,
Sniffing round and round about,
Till I find you children out;
And my dreadful den shall be
Deep within the hollow tree."

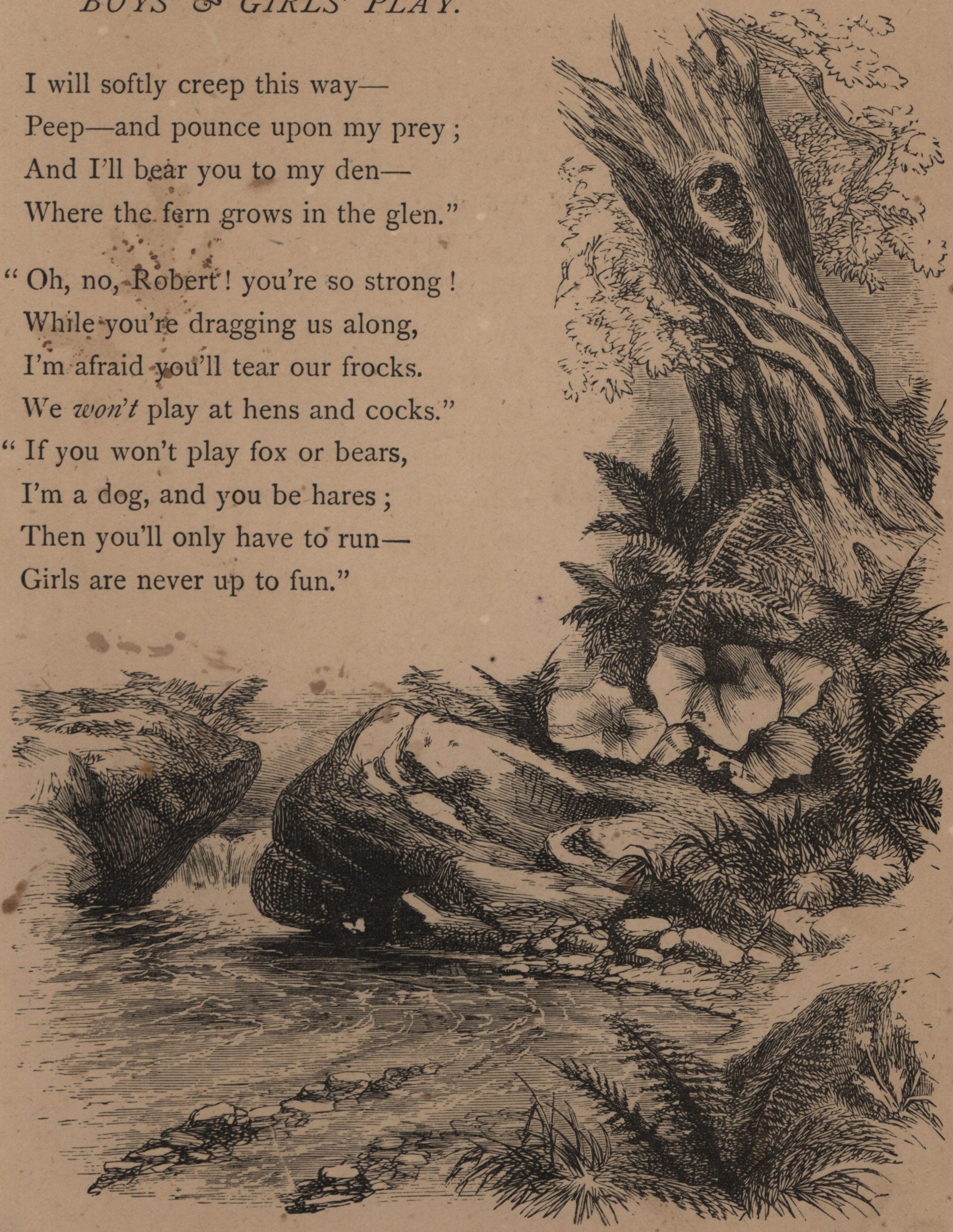


"Oh, no! please not, Robert dear,
Do not be a grisly bear;
Little May was half afraid
When she heard the noise you made,
Roaring like a lion strong,
Just now, as you came along;
And she'll scream and start to-night,
If you give her any fright."

"Well, then, I will be a fox!
You shall be the hens and cocks,
In the farmer's apple-tree,
Crowing out so lustily.

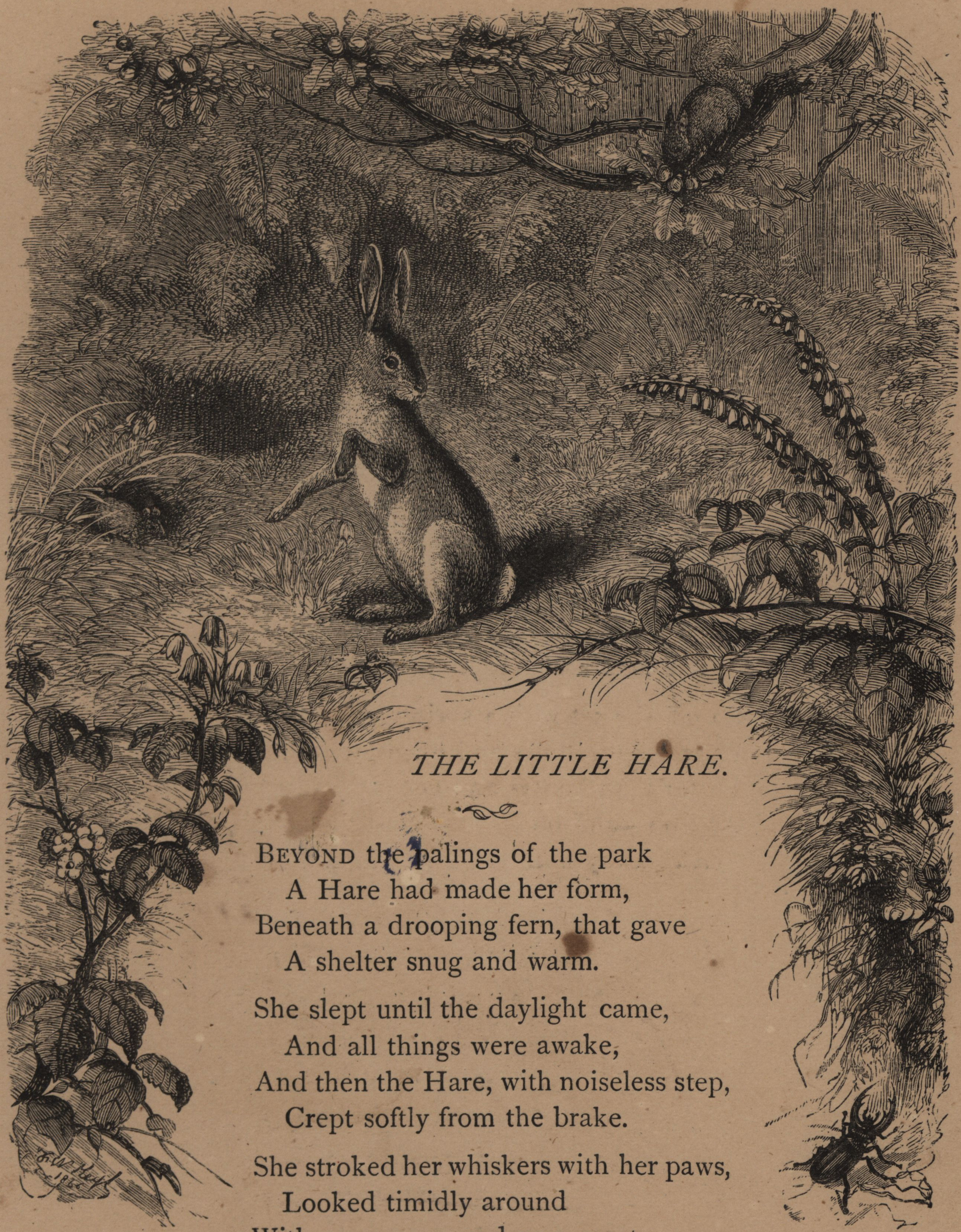
I will softly creep this way—
Peep—and pounce upon my prey;
And I'll bear you to my den—
Where the fern grows in the glen."

"Oh, no, Robert! you're so strong!
While you're dragging us along,
I'm afraid you'll tear our frocks.
We *won't* play at hens and cocks."
"If you won't play fox or bears,
I'm a dog, and you be hares;
Then you'll only have to run—
Girls are never up to fun."



"You've *your* play, and we have *ours*.
Go and climb the trees again.
I, and little May, and Jane,
Are so happy with our flowers.
Jane is culling foxglove bells,
May and I are making posies,
And we want to search the dells
For the latest summer roses."





THE LITTLE HARE.

Beyond the palings of the park
A Hare had made her form,
Beneath a drooping fern, that gave
A shelter snug and warm.

She slept until the daylight came,
And all things were awake,
And then the Hare, with noiseless step,
Crept softly from the brake.

She stroked her whiskers with her paws,
Looked timidly around
With open eyes, and ears erect
That caught the smallest sound.

THE LITTLE HARE.

The Field-mouse rustled in the grass,
  The Squirrel in the trees,
But Puss was not at all afraid
  Of common sounds like these.

She frisk'd and gamboll'd with delight,
  And cropp'd a leaf or two
Of clover, and of tender grass,
  That glisten'd in the dew.

What was it, then, that made her start,
  And run away so fast?
She heard the distant sound of hounds,
  She heard the huntsman's blast.

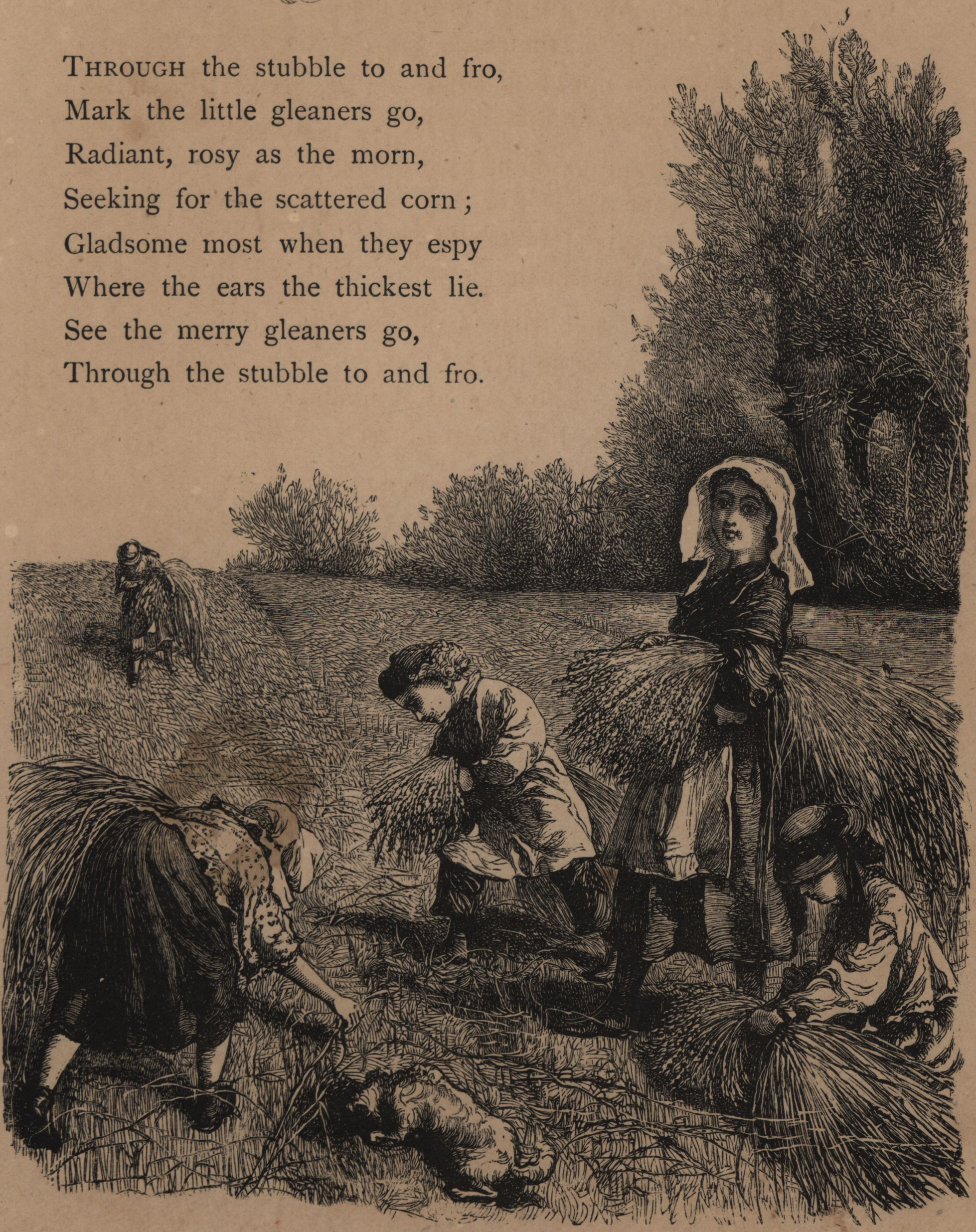
Hoy!—tally-ho!—hoy!—tally-ho!
  The hounds are in full cry;
Ehew! ehew!—in scarlet coats
  The men are sweeping by.

So off she set with a spring and a bound,
Over the meadows and open ground,
Faster than hunter and faster than hound;
And on—and on—till she lost the sound,
  And away went the little Hare.



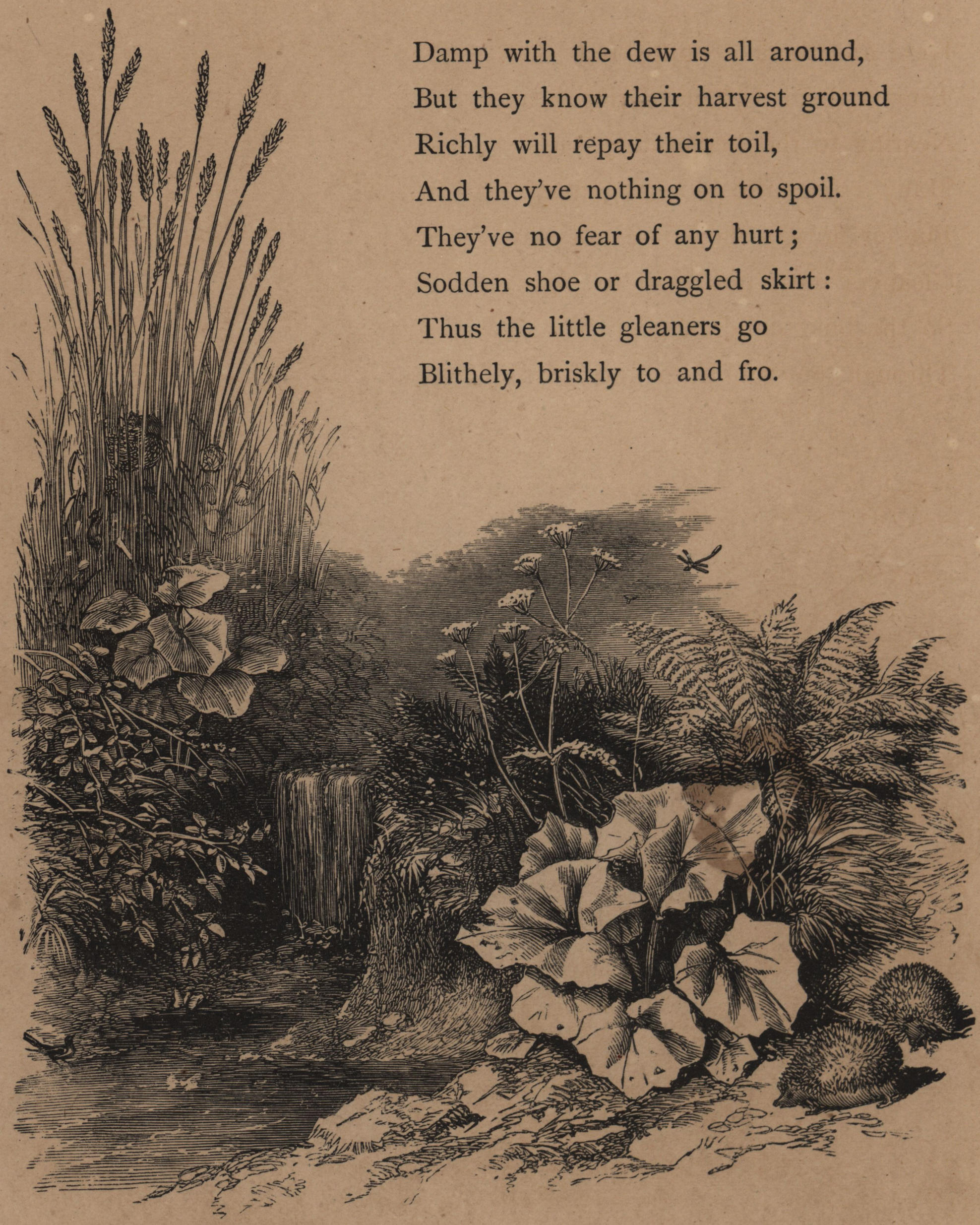
THE GLEANERS.

THROUGH the stubble to and fro,
Mark the little gleaners go,
Radiant, rosy as the morn,
Seeking for the scattered corn;
Gladsome most when they espy
Where the ears the thickest lie.
See the merry gleaners go,
Through the stubble to and fro.



THE GLEANERS.

Damp with the dew is all around,
But they know their harvest ground
Richly will repay their toil,
And they've nothing on to spoil.
They've no fear of any hurt;
Sodden shoe or draggled skirt:
Thus the little gleaners go
Blithely, briskly to and fro.



THE GLEANERS.

Here and there a poppy red
Tempts them with its flaring head;
Nearing to the hedge, they see
Many a favourite blooming free,
But for flowers they dare not stay:
Gleaners must not yield to play.
So the busy children go,
Through the stubble to and fro.



THE GLEANERS.

When they've done and take their wheat
Up into the village street,
Glad will be poor grandame dear,
As their brimming arms appear,
And her wonder-opened eyes
Speak her praise with her surprise:
This they picture as they go,
Through the stubble to and fro.





EVENING DEVOTION.

SOFTLY sighs the evening breeze
Through the blooming chestnut trees:
Little birds from rocking spray
Sing their hymn to dying day.

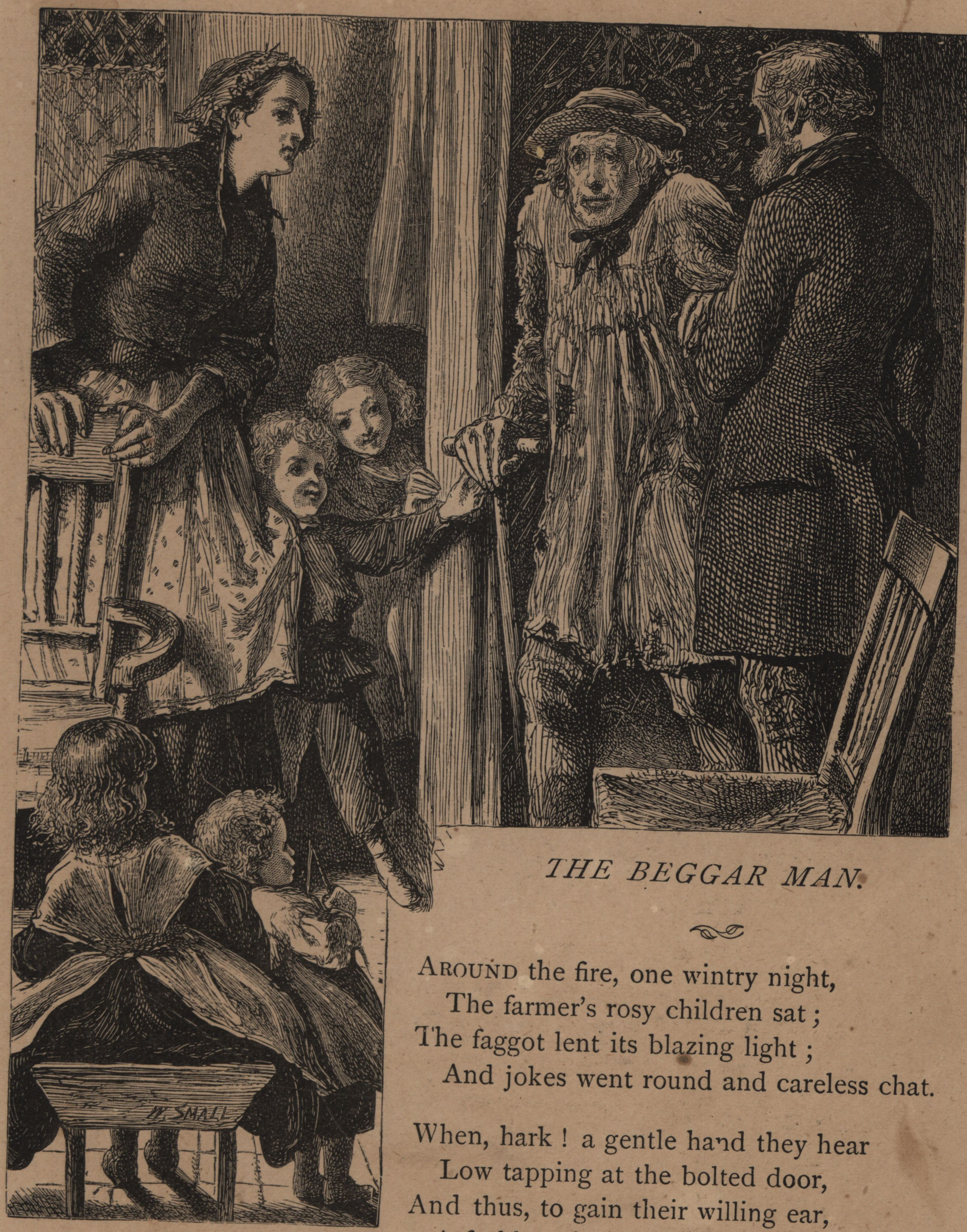
EVENING DEVOTION.

Flowers that when the sun arose,
Oped to life, now softly close:
As an angel, from afar,
Beams the pale-faced evening star.

In the distant western sky
Clouds like golden landscapes lie:
As a little bird at rest,
Baby sleeps on Mother's breast.

Grandame gives her knitting o'er,
And beside our cottage door
Father sits, and we draw near,
Heaven's eternal truths to hear.



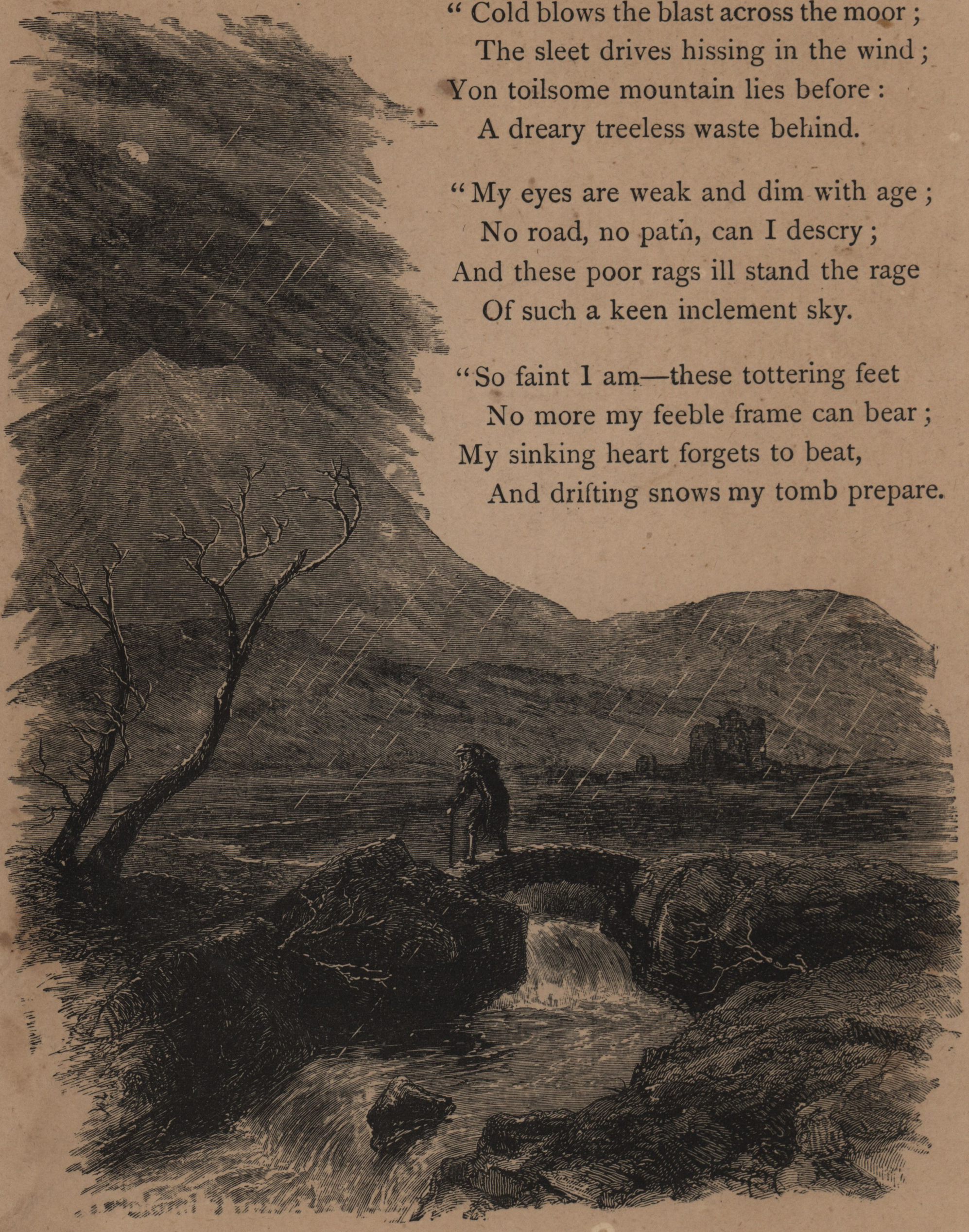


THE BEGGAR MAN.

AROUND the fire, one wintry night,
The farmer's rosy children sat;
The faggot lent its blazing light;
And jokes went round and careless chat.

When, hark! a gentle hand they hear
Low tapping at the bolted door,
And thus, to gain their willing ear,
A feeble voice was heard t' implore:

THE BEGGAR MAN.



"Cold blows the blast across the moor;
The sleet drives hissing in the wind;
Yon toilsome mountain lies before:
A dreary treeless waste behind.

"My eyes are weak and dim with age;
No road, no path, can I descry;
And these poor rags ill stand the rage
Of such a keen inclement sky.

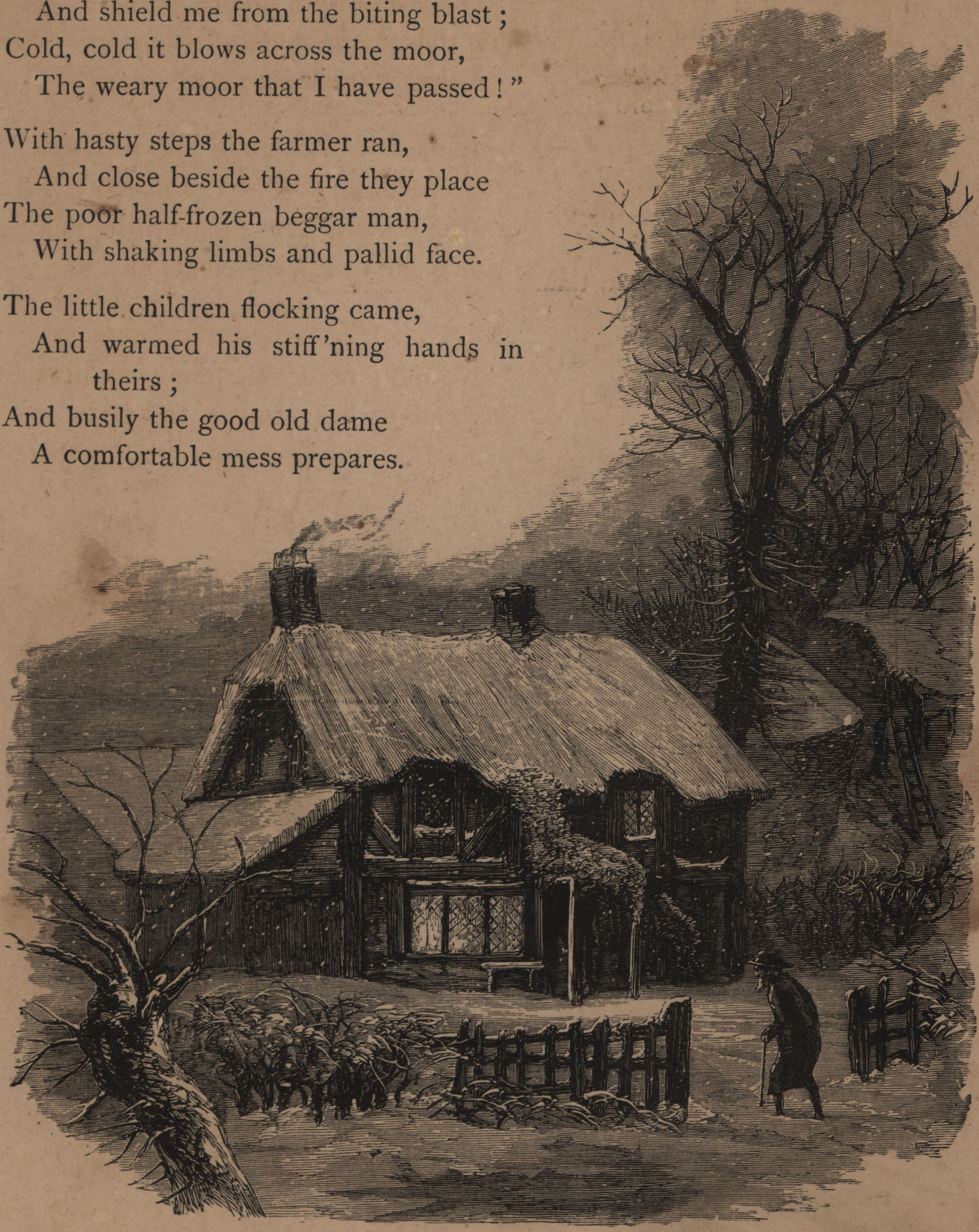
"So faint I am—these tottering feet
No more my feeble frame can bear;
My sinking heart forgets to beat,
And drifting snows my tomb prepare.

THE BEGGAR MAN.

"Open your hospitable door,
And shield me from the biting blast;
Cold, cold it blows across the moor,
The weary moor that I have passed!"

With hasty steps the farmer ran,
And close beside the fire they place
The poor half-frozen beggar man,
With shaking limbs and pallid face.

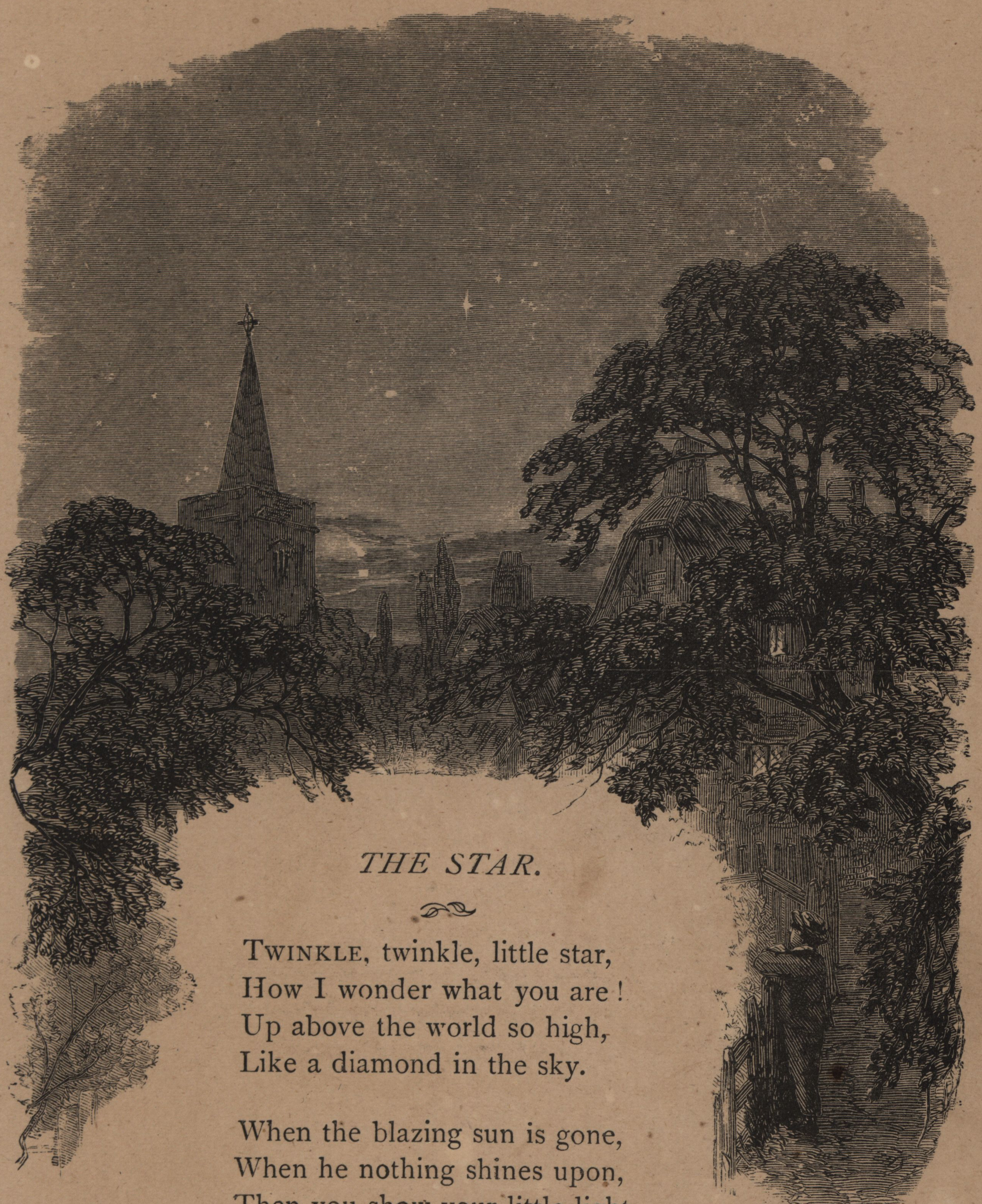
The little children flocking came,
And warmed his stiff'ning hands in theirs;
And busily the good old dame
A comfortable mess prepares.



Their kindness cheered his drooping soul;
And slowly down his wrinkled cheek
The big round tear was seen to roll,
And told the thanks he could not speak.

The children, too, began to sigh,
And all their merry chat was o'er;
And yet they felt, they knew not why,
More glad than they had done before.





THE STAR.

TWINKLE, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are!
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.

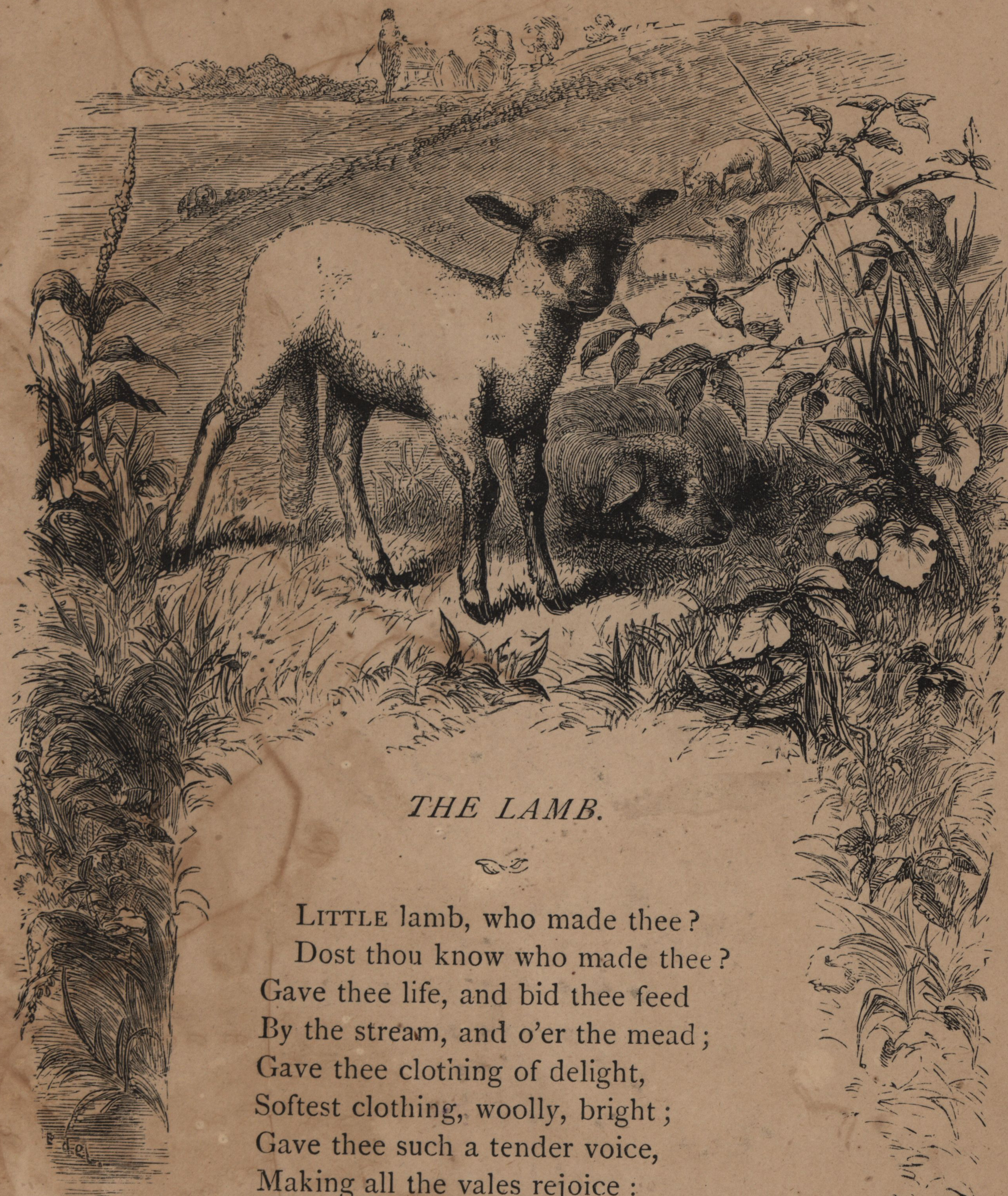
When the blazing sun is gone,
When he nothing shines upon,
Then you show your little light,
Twinkle, twinkle, all the night.

Then the traveller in the dark
Thanks you for your tiny spark :
He could not see which way to go,
If you did not twinkle so.

In the dark blue sky you keep,
And often through my curtains peep,
For you never shut your eye,
Till the sun is in the sky.

As your bright and tiny spark
Lights the traveller in the dark,
Though I know not what you are,
Twinkle, twinkle, little star.





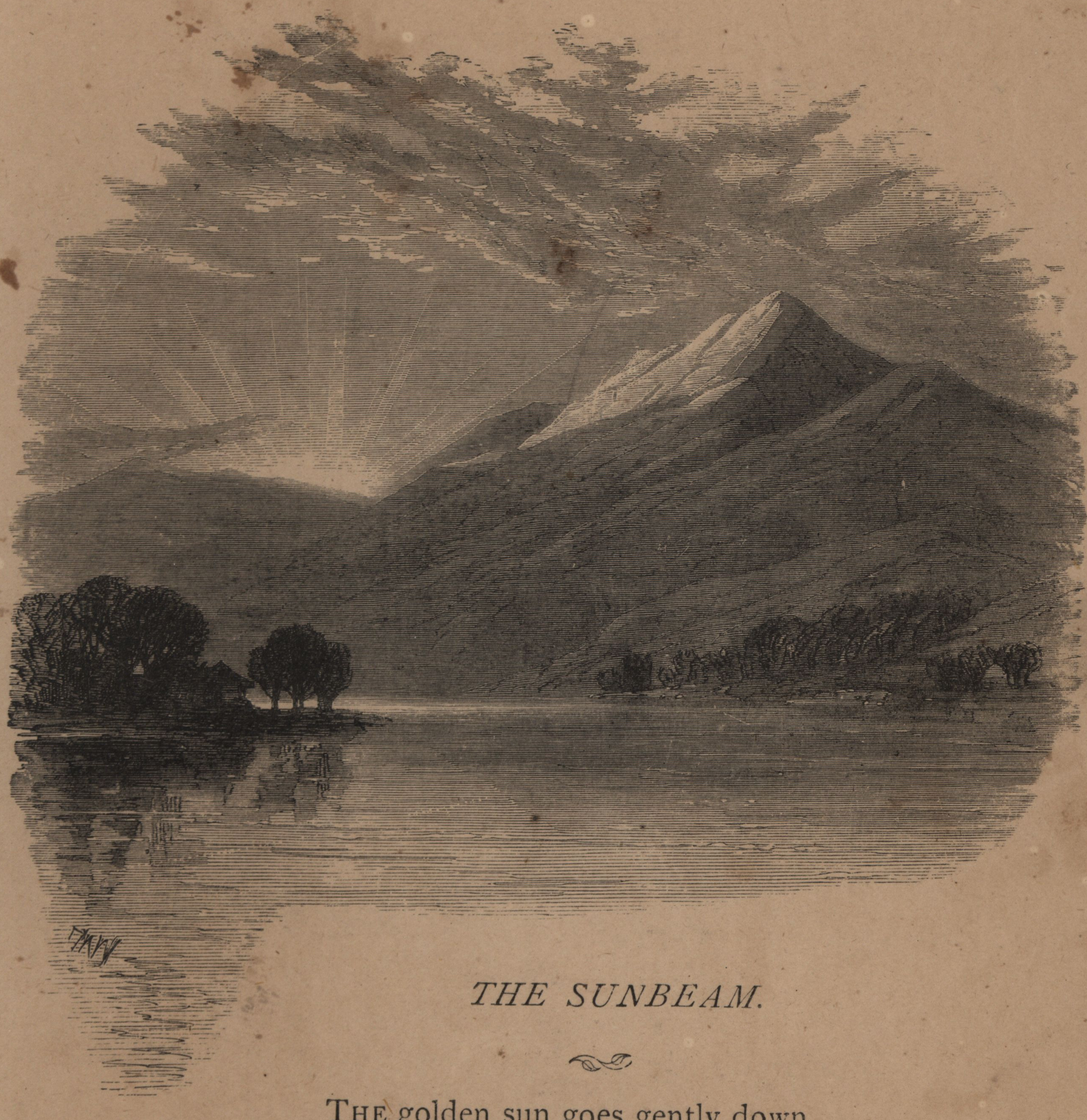
THE LAMB.

LITTLE lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?
Gave thee life, and bid thee feed
By the stream, and o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice:
Little lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

THE LAMB.

Little lamb, I'll tell thee;
Little lamb, I'll tell thee.
He is callèd by thy name,
For He calls Himself a lamb.
He is meek and He is mild,
He became a little child:
I a child and thou a lamb,
We are callèd by His name.
Little lamb, God bless thee;
Little lamb, God bless thee.





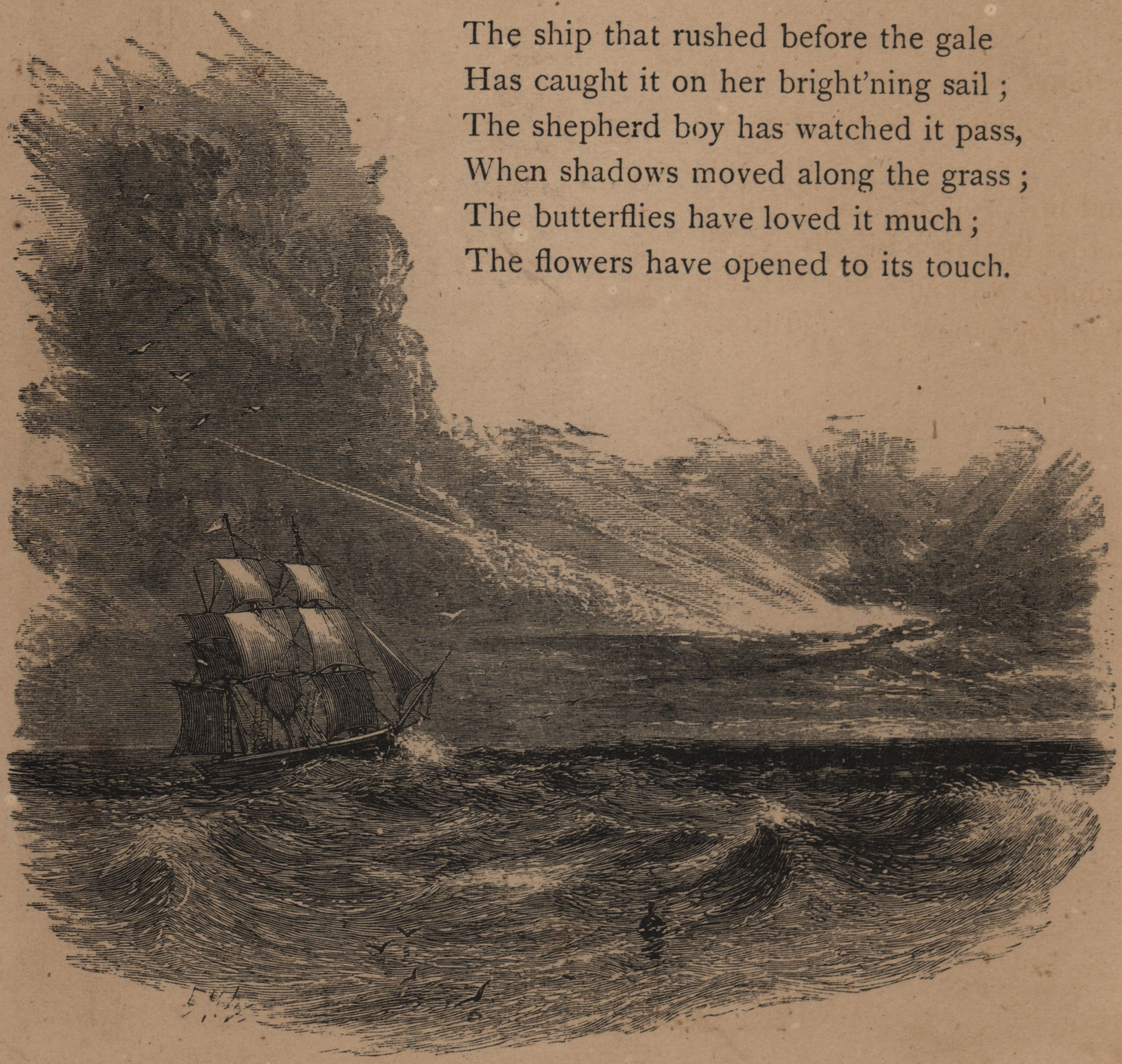
THE SUNBEAM.

The golden sun goes gently down
Behind the western mountain brown ;
One last bright ray is quivering still,
A crimson line along the hill,
And colours with a rosy light
The clouds far up in heaven's blue height.

THE SUNBEAM.

How many scenes and sights to-day
Have basked beneath the selfsame ray,
Since first the glowing morning broke,
And larks sprang up and lambs awoke,
And fields, with glistening dewdrops bright,
Seemed changed to sheets of silver white !

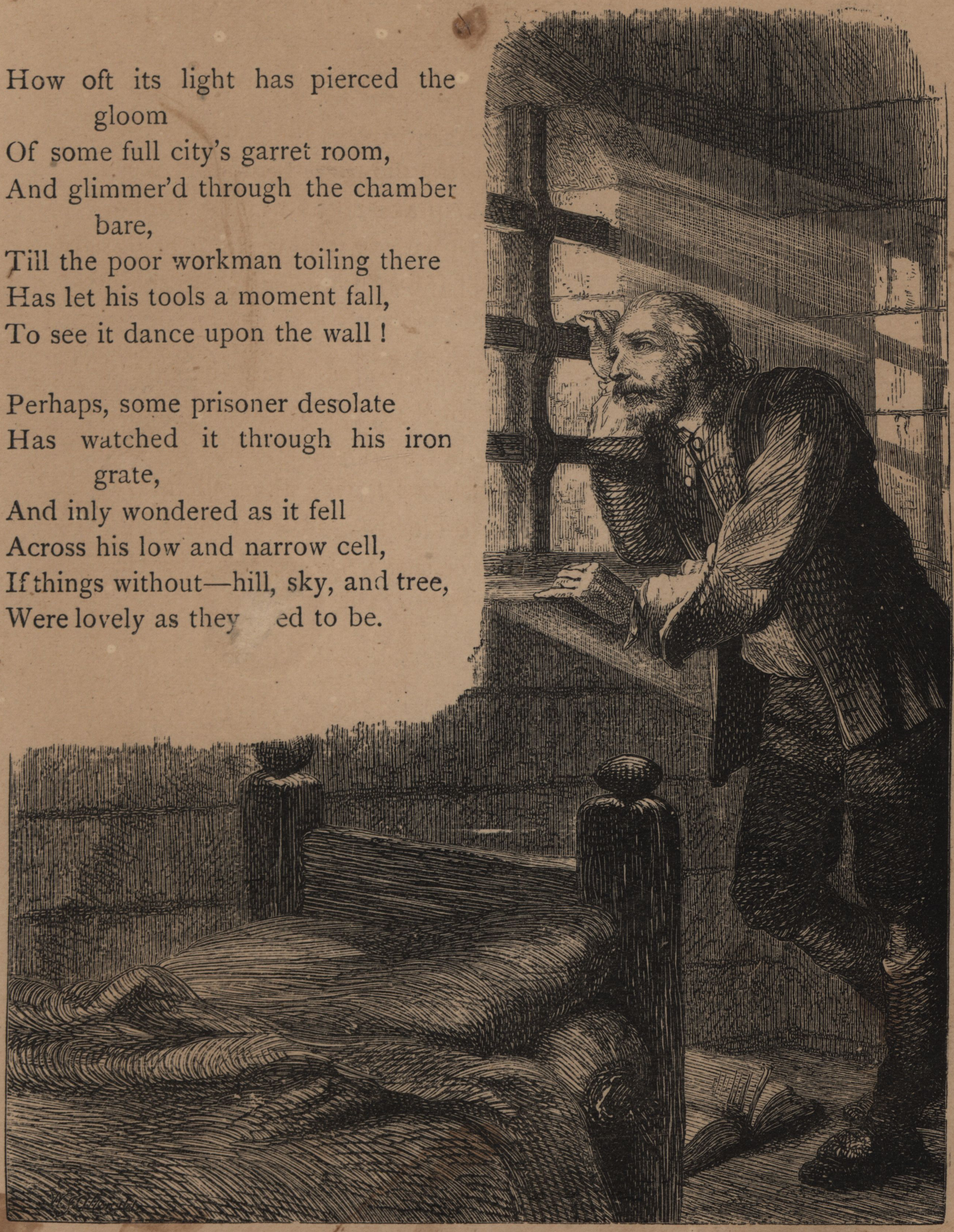
The ship that rushed before the gale
Has caught it on her bright'ning sail ;
The shepherd boy has watched it pass,
When shadows moved along the grass ;
The butterflies have loved it much ;
The flowers have opened to its touch.



THE SUNBEAM.

How oft its light has pierced the
gloom
Of some full city's garret room,
And glimmer'd through the chamber
bare,
Till the poor workman toiling there
Has let his tools a moment fall,
To see it dance upon the wall!

Perhaps, some prisoner desolate
Has watched it through his iron
grate,
And inly wondered as it fell
Across his low and narrow cell,
If things without—hill, sky, and tree,
Were lovely as they ed to be.



THE SUNBEAM.

Where'er its ray has broken in,
Have light, and heat, and brightness been :—
So gentle love in Christian heart
Doth help, and hope, and peace impart,
Nor turns away when griefs oppress,
But ever shines, and shines to bless.

Go gently down, thou golden gleam :
And as I watch thy fading beam,
So let me learn, like thee, to give
Pleasure and blessing while I live ;
With kindly deed and smiling face,
A sunbeam in my lowly place.





THE HAYFIELD.

Now, youngsters, you may run and
play,
And pitch about the new-mown hay ;
The day is fair, you're ripe for fun,
So to it, children, every one.



THE HAYFIELD.

No second bidding is required,
For every heart with joy is fired ;
At once the whole troop bound away,
And toss and tumble in the hay.

Now stifled laughs and mirthful cries
From out one biggish heap arise,
And then pops up that mad-cap May,
Half smother'd from the new-mown hay.

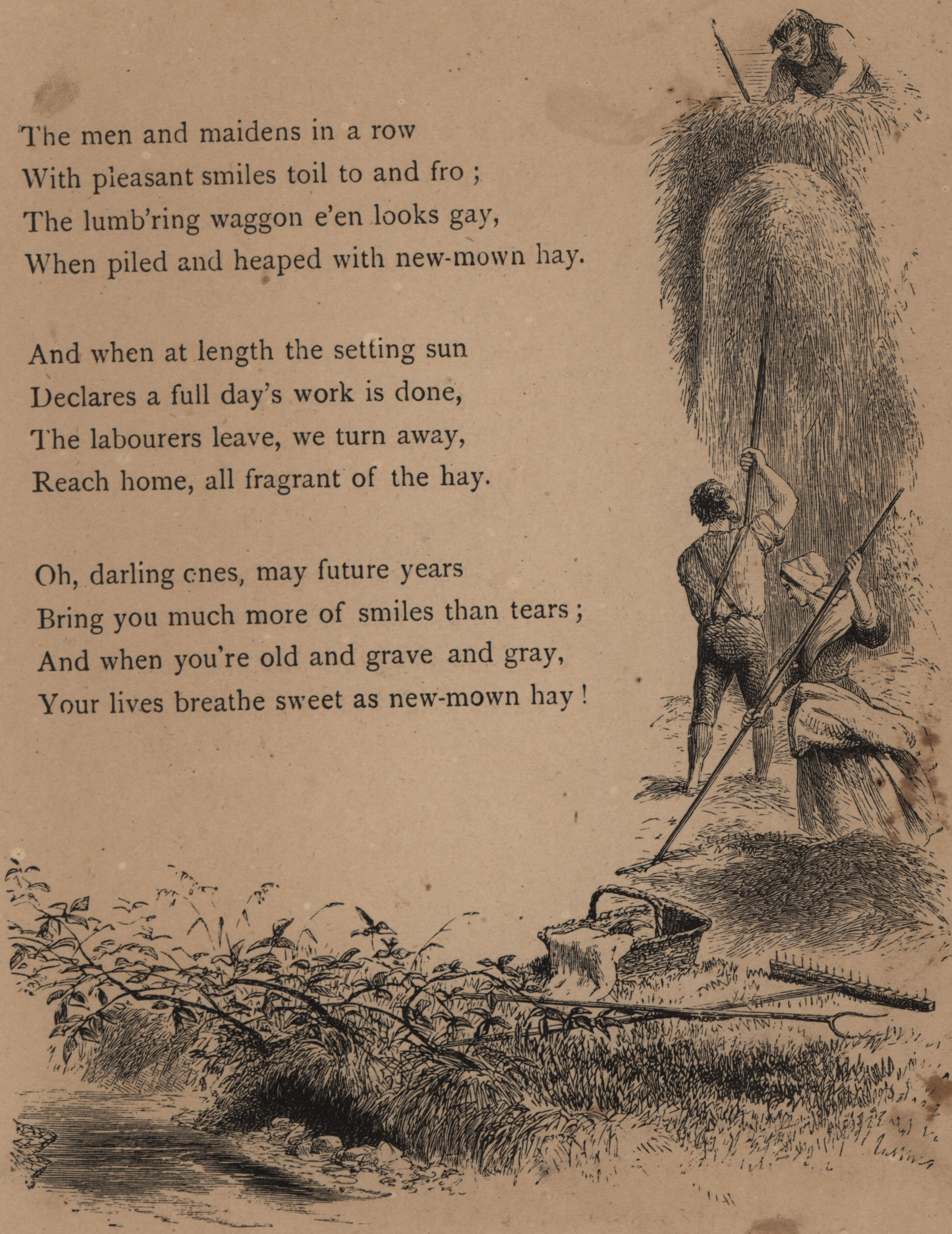
I go to give some sage advice,
When lo ! I'm set on in a trice—
Am forced to turn and flee their play,
Pursued and pelted with the hay.

THE HAYFIELD.

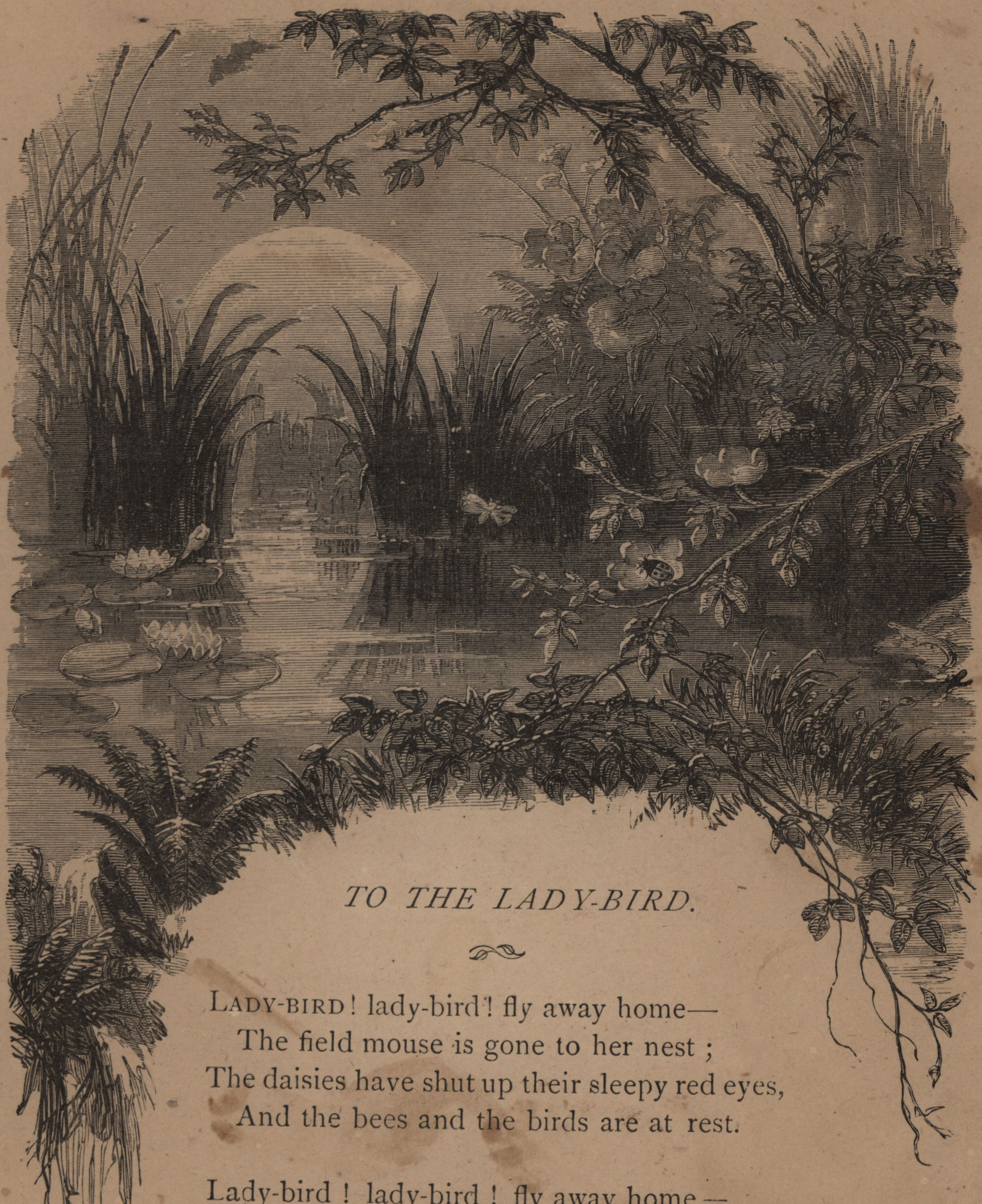
The men and maidens in a row
With pleasant smiles toil to and fro ;
The lumb'ring waggon e'en looks gay,
When piled and heaped with new-mown hay.

And when at length the setting sun
Declares a full day's work is done,
The labourers leave, we turn away,
Reach home, all fragrant of the hay.

Oh, darling ones, may future years
Bring you much more of smiles than tears ;
And when you're old and grave and gray,
Your lives breathe sweet as new-mown hay !







TO THE LADY-BIRD.

LADY-BIRD! lady-bird! fly away home—
The field mouse is gone to her nest;
The daisies have shut up their sleepy red eyes,
And the bees and the birds are at rest.

Lady-bird! lady-bird! fly away home—
The glow-worm is lighting her lamp;
The dew's falling fast, and your fine speckled wings
Will flag with the close-clinging damp.

THE LADY-BIRD IN THE FIELDS.

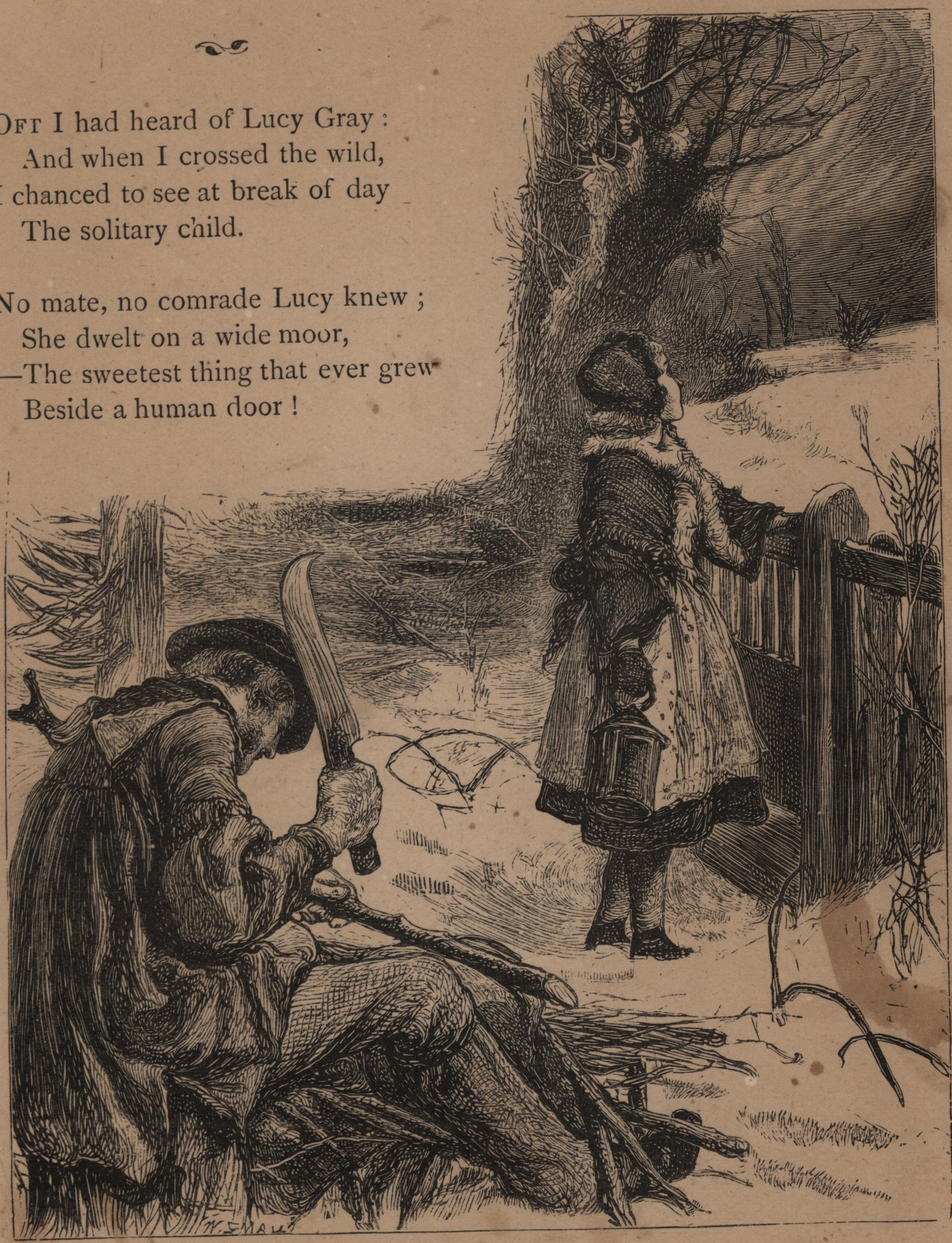
Lady-bird ! lady-bird ! fly away home,
The fairy-bells tinkle afar ;
Make haste, or they'll catch you, and harness you fast,
With a cobweb, to Oberon's car.



LUCY GRAY.

Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray :
And when I crossed the wild,
I chanced to see at break of day
The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew ;
She dwelt on a wide moor,
—The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door !



LUCY GRAY.

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
The hare upon the green ;
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
Will never more be seen.

"To-night will be a stormy night—
You to the town must go ;
And take a lantern, Child, to light
Your mother through the snow."

"That, father ! will I gladly do :
'Tis scarcely afternoon—
The minster-clock has just struck two,
And yonder is the moon !"

At this the father raised his hook,
And snapped a fagot band ;
He plied his work ;—and Lucy took
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe :
With many a wanton stroke
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
That rises up like smoke.

LUCY GRAY.

The storm came on before its time :
She wandered up and down ;
And many a hill did Lucy climb :
But never reached the town.

The wretched parents all that night
Went shouting far and wide ;
But there was neither sound nor sight
To serve them for a guide.

At day-break on a hill they stood
That overlooked the moor ;
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,
A furlong from their door.

They wept—and, turning homeward, cried,
"In heaven we all shall meet ;"
When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy's feet.

Half breathless from the steep hill's edge
They tracked the footmarks small ;
And through the broken hawthorn hedge,
And by the long stone-wall ;

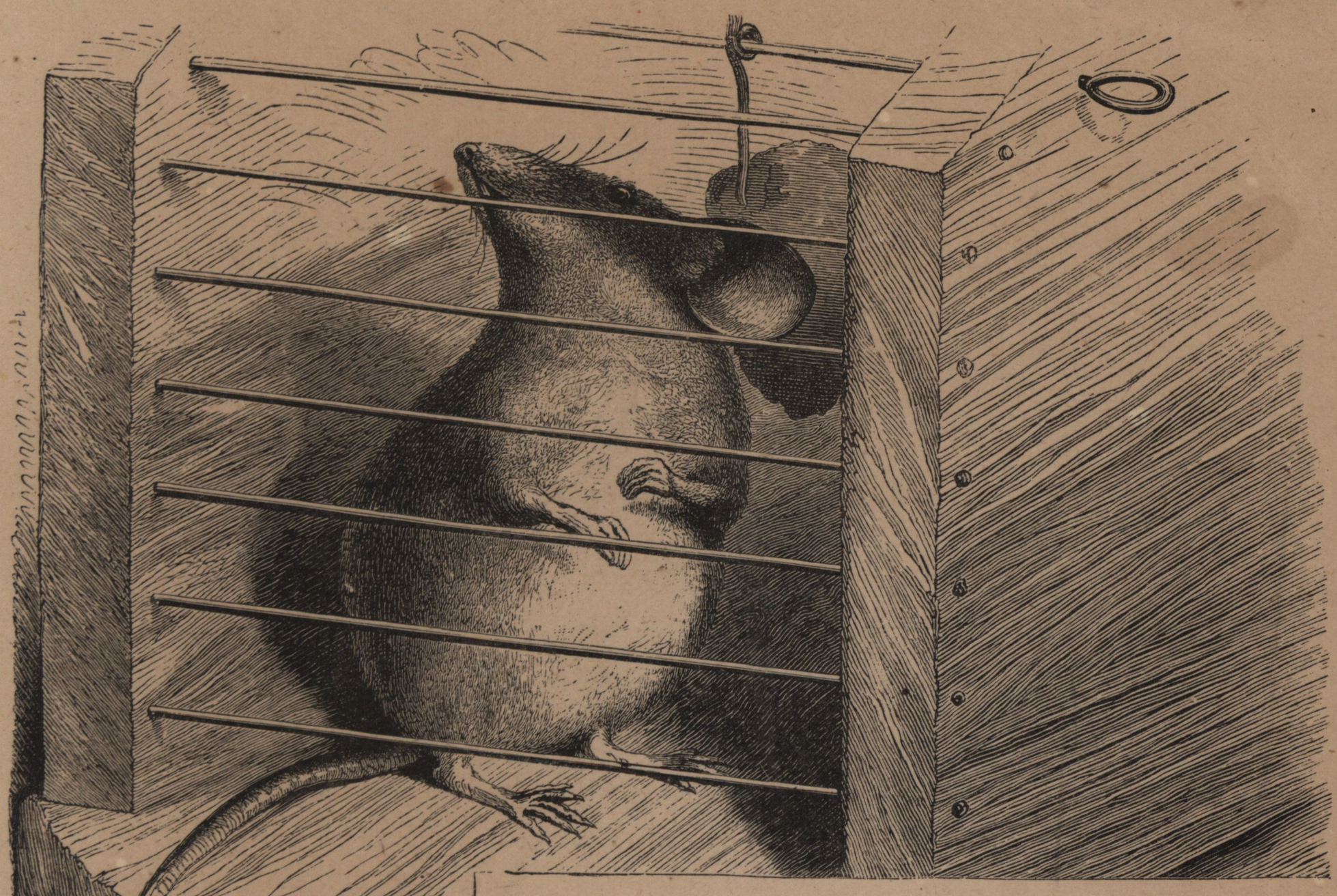
And then an open field they crossed :
The marks were still the same ;
They tracked them on, nor ever lost ;
And to the bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank
Those footmarks, one by one,
Into the middle of the plank ;
And further there were none !

Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child ;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along.
And never looks behind ;
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind.





THE MOUSE'S PETITION:

FOUND IN THE TRAP, WHERE HE HAD BEEN CONFINED ALL NIGHT.

Oh, hear a pensive prisoner's prayer,
For liberty that sighs;
And never let thine heart be shut
Against the wretch's cries!

For here forlorn and sad I sit
Within this wiry grate;
And tremble at the approaching morn,
Which brings impending fate.

If e'er thy breast with freedom glowed,
And spurned a tyrant's chain,
Let not thy strong, oppressive force
A free-born mouse detain!

THE MOUSE'S PETITION.

Oh! do not stain with guiltless blood
  Thy hospitable hearth!
Nor triumph that thy wiles betrayed
  A prize so little worth.

The scattered gleanings of a feast
  My frugal meals supply;
But if thy unrelenting heart
  That slender boon deny,—

The cheerful light, the vital air,
  Are blessings widely given;
Let Nature's commoners enjoy
  The common gifts of Heaven.

So when destruction works unseen,
  Which man, like mice, may share,
May some kind angel clear thy path,
  And break the hidden snare.





FATHER IS COMING.

THE clock is on the stroke of six,
The father's work is done ;
Sweep up the hearth and mend the fire,
And put the kettle on :
The wild night-wind is blowing cold,
'Tis dreary crossing o'er the wold.

FATHER IS COMING.

He is crossing o'er the wold apace,
He is stronger than the storm ;
He does not feel the cold, not he,
His heart it is so warm :
For father's heart is stout and true
As ever human bosom knew.

He makes all toil, all hardship light :
Would all men were the same !
So ready to be pleased, so kind,
So very slow to blame !
Folks need not be unkind, austere ;
For love hath readier will than fear.

Nay, do not close the shutters, child ;
For far along the lane
The little window looks, and he
Can see it shining plain ;
I've heard him say he loves to mark
The cheerful firelight through the dark.

FATHER IS COMING.

And we'll do all that father likes ;
His wishes are so few :
Would they were more ; that every hour
Some wish of his I knew :
I'm sure it makes a happy day,
When I can please him any way.

I know he's coming by this sign,
That baby's almost wild ;
See how he laughs and crows and stares—
Heaven bless the merry child !
He's father's self in face and limb,
And father's heart is strong in him.

Hark ! hark ! I hear his footsteps now ;
He's through the garden gate :
Run, little Bess, and ope the door,
And do not let him wait.
Shout, baby, shout ! and clap thy hands,
For father on the threshold stands.





SUNSHINE AND SHOWER.

LURED by the fairness of the day,
Some little folk have left the town :
And, for an afternoon of sport,
Into our green lane wandered down.

SUNSHINE AND SHOWER.



The hedges crowd with bloom and leaf,
Each bird seems full of life and song;
And eloquent of purity,
The babble of that little throng.

Those chubby hands know passing well
Where shy-faced violets abound,
And every deep, and slope, and nook,
Where every summer blossom's found.

Soon hats and laps are brimming o'er
With sweet excess of sweetest flowers,
While, mirrored in each darling face,
Reigns the pure soul of childhood's hours.

So deep in sport, they do not heed
The clouds that now begin to lower,
And start surprised when all at once
Down, down there comes a rattling shower.

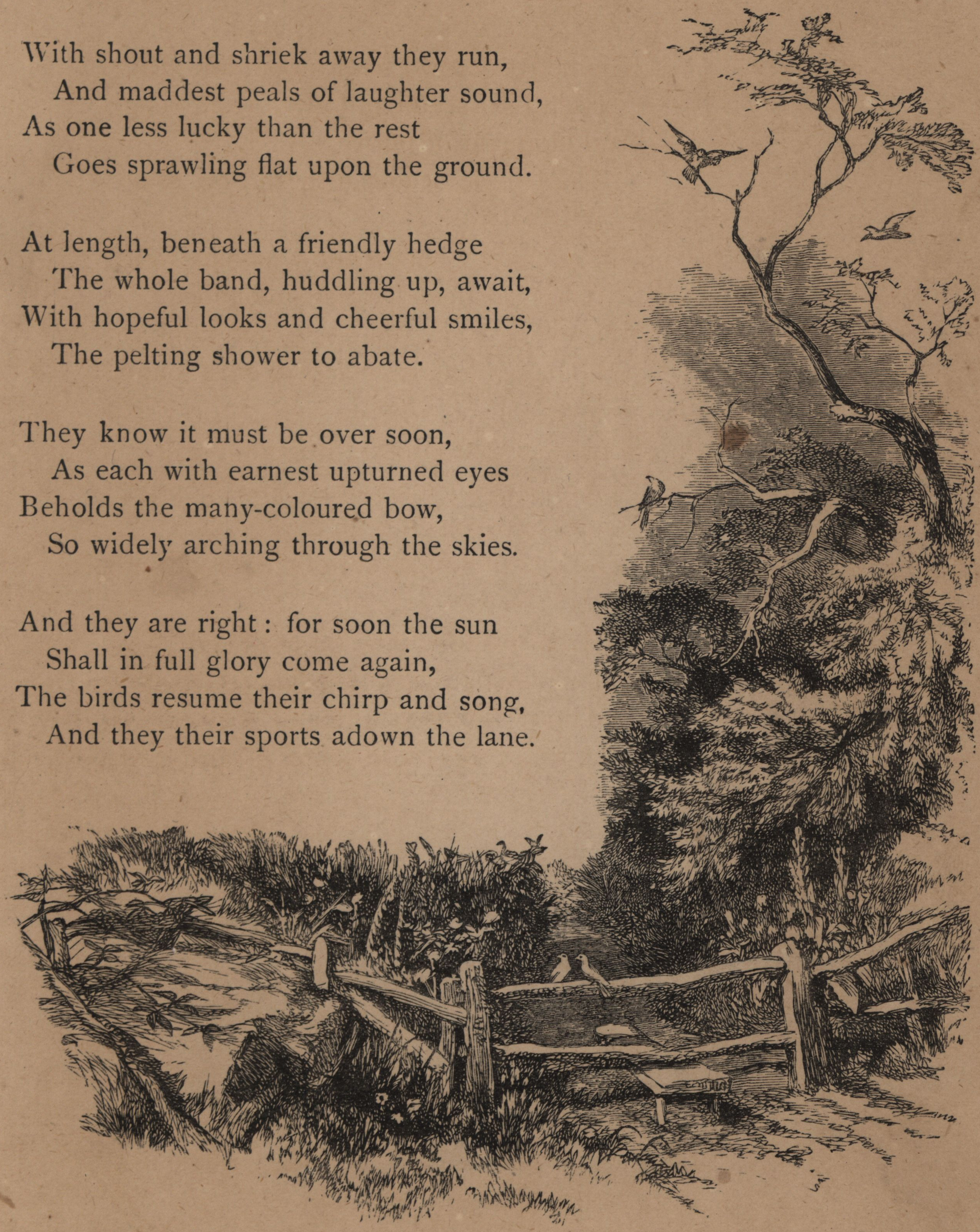
SUNSHINE AND SHOWER.

With shout and shriek away they run,
And maddest peals of laughter sound,
As one less lucky than the rest
Goes sprawling flat upon the ground.

At length, beneath a friendly hedge
The whole band, huddling up, await,
With hopeful looks and cheerful smiles,
The pelting shower to abate.

They know it must be over soon,
As each with earnest upturned eyes
Beholds the many-coloured bow,
So widely arching through the skies.

And they are right: for soon the sun
Shall in full glory come again,
The birds resume their chirp and song,
And they their sports adown the lane.



SUNSHINE AND SHOWER.

Take heed, then, little people all;
And if in future days you find
Storm clouds o'ershadowing life's way,
Be mindful of the sun behind.

In faith hope on as now you hope,
With patience wait as now you do,
And soon perchance you may behold
The light of heaven breaking through.





YIELDING TO ANOTHER.

WHEN mother takes up baby dear,
And sets him on her knee,
And sings her song so sweet and clear
Until he laughs in glee ;

I will not frown, nor wish that I
Were sitting there instead ;
And stretch my little arms on high,
And make my face grow red.

YIELDING TO ANOTHER.

That would be like a selfish boy,
  Who loves himself so much,
He cannot feel another's joy;
  And I would not be such.

For mother says, we must not care
  About ourselves alone,
But freely give, or gladly share,
  What might be all our own.

She says we must be yielding still,
  And still to others kind,
Must often give up our own will,
  And with a cheerful mind.

So, though he 's sitting in my place,
  I'll share in his delight;
And when he looks into my face
  And laughs with all his might,

I'll laugh again, like little stream
  Whereon the sun doth play,
That glistens in the sparkling beam,
  And gives back ray for ray.

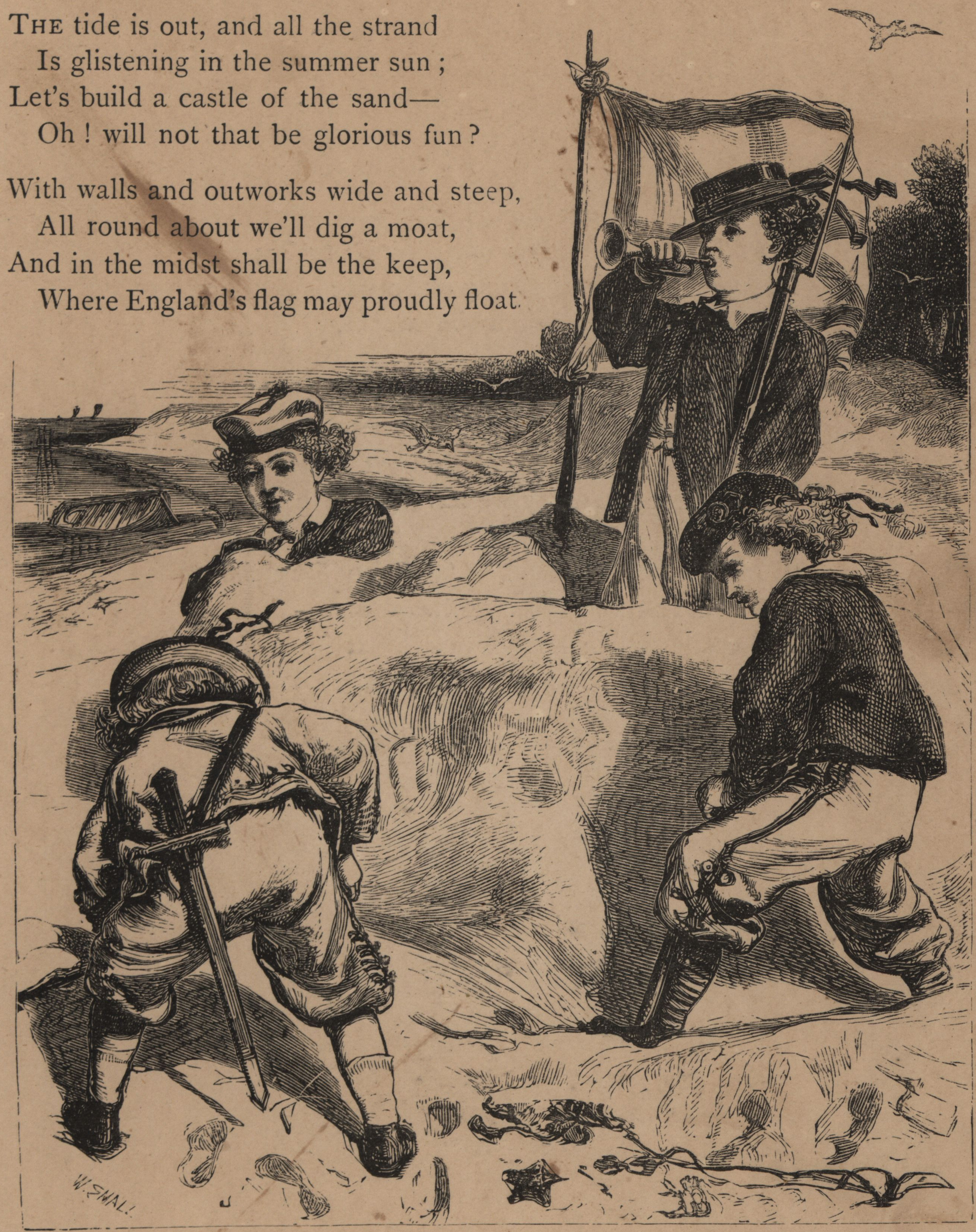
Smile on, dear baby; I'll not climb
  To set me where you sit,
My turn will come another time;
  I'll go, and play a bit.



THE SAND CASTLE.

THE tide is out, and all the strand
Is glistening in the summer sun;
Let's build a castle of the sand—
Oh! will not that be glorious fun?

With walls and outworks wide and steep,
All round about we'll dig a moat,
And in the midst shall be the keep,
Where England's flag may proudly float.



THE SAND CASTLE.

And where the drawbridge ought to be,
We'll make a causeway to the shore,
Well paved with stones, for you and me
To get to land when tempests roar.

We'll sit within our citadel,
And watch the tide come o'er the rocks;
But we have built it strong and well:
It will not fall for common shocks.

The moat may fill, the waves may beat,
We watch the siege all undismayed,
Because, you know, we can retreat
Along the causeway we have laid.

"Haul down your flag!" "Oh, no!" we shout,
Our drums and trumpets heard afar—
The castle sinks; but we march out
With all the honours of the war.





TO THE CUCKOO.

HAIL, beauteous stranger of the grove!
Thou messenger of Spring!
Now Heaven repairs thy rural seat,
And woods thy welcome sing.

What time the daisy decks the green,
Thy certain voice we hear;
Hast thou a star to guide thy path,
Or mark the rolling year?

Delightful visitant! with thee
I hail the time of flowers,
And hear the sound of music sweet
From birds among the bowers.

TO THE CUCKOO.

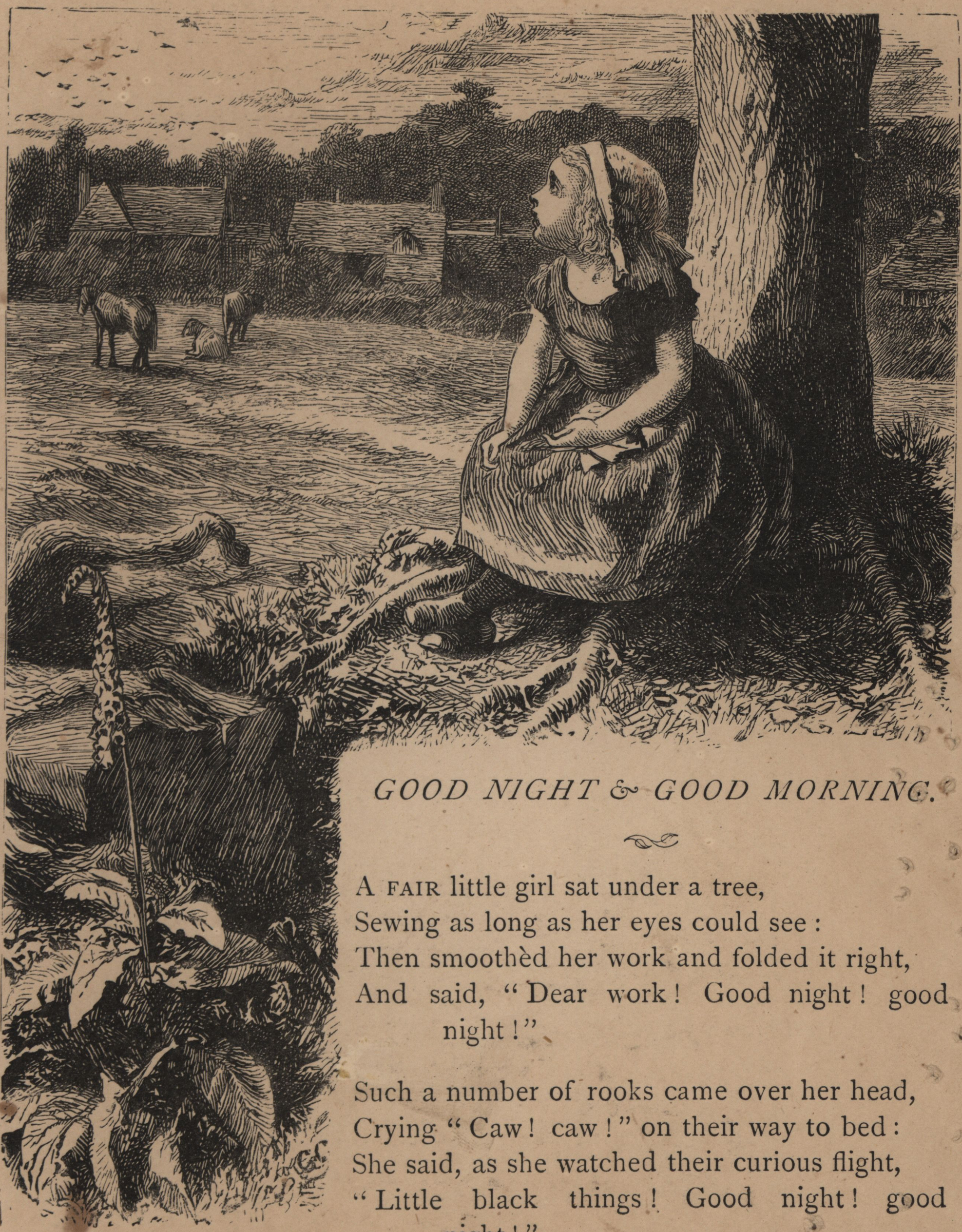
The schoolboy wandering through the wood,
To pull the primrose gay,
Starts the new voice of Spring to hear,
And imitates the lay.

What time the pea puts on the bloom
Thou fliest thy vocal vale,
An annual guest in other lands,
Another Spring to hail.

Sweet bird! thy bower is ever green,
Thy sky is ever clear;
Thou hast no sorrow in thy song,
No Winter in thy year.

Oh, could I fly, I'd fly with thee!
We'd make with joyful wing
Our annual visit o'er the globe,
Companions of the Spring.





GOOD NIGHT & GOOD MORNING.

A FAIR little girl sat under a tree,
Sewing as long as her eyes could see:
Then smoothèd her work and folded it right,
And said, "Dear work! Good night! good night!"

Such a number of rooks came over her head,
Crying "Caw! caw!" on their way to bed:
She said, as she watched their curious flight,
"Little black things! Good night! good night!"

GOOD NIGHT & GOOD MORNING.

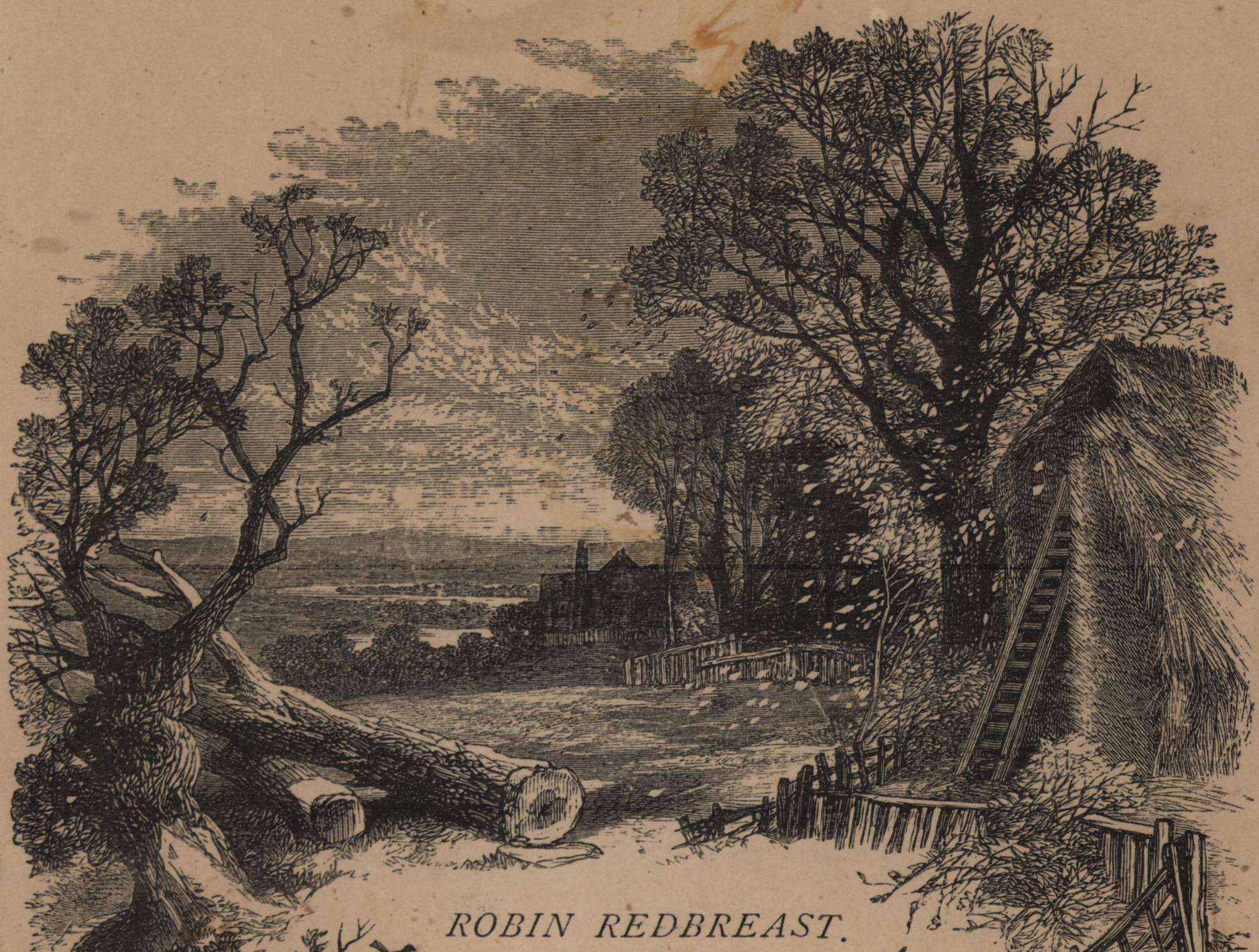
The horses neighed and the oxen lowed ;
The sheep's "Bleat ! bleat !" came over the road ;
All seeming to say, with a quiet delight,
"Good little girl ! Good night ! good night !"

She did not say to the sun "Good night !"
Though she saw him there, like a ball of light ;
For she knew he had God's own time to keep
All over the world, and never could sleep.

The tall pink foxglove bowed his head—
The violets curtsied and went to bed ;
And good little Lucy tied up her hair,
And said on her knees her favourite prayer.

And while on her pillow she softly lay,
She knew nothing more till again it was day ;
And all things said to the beautiful sun,
"Good morning ! good morning ! our work is begun !"





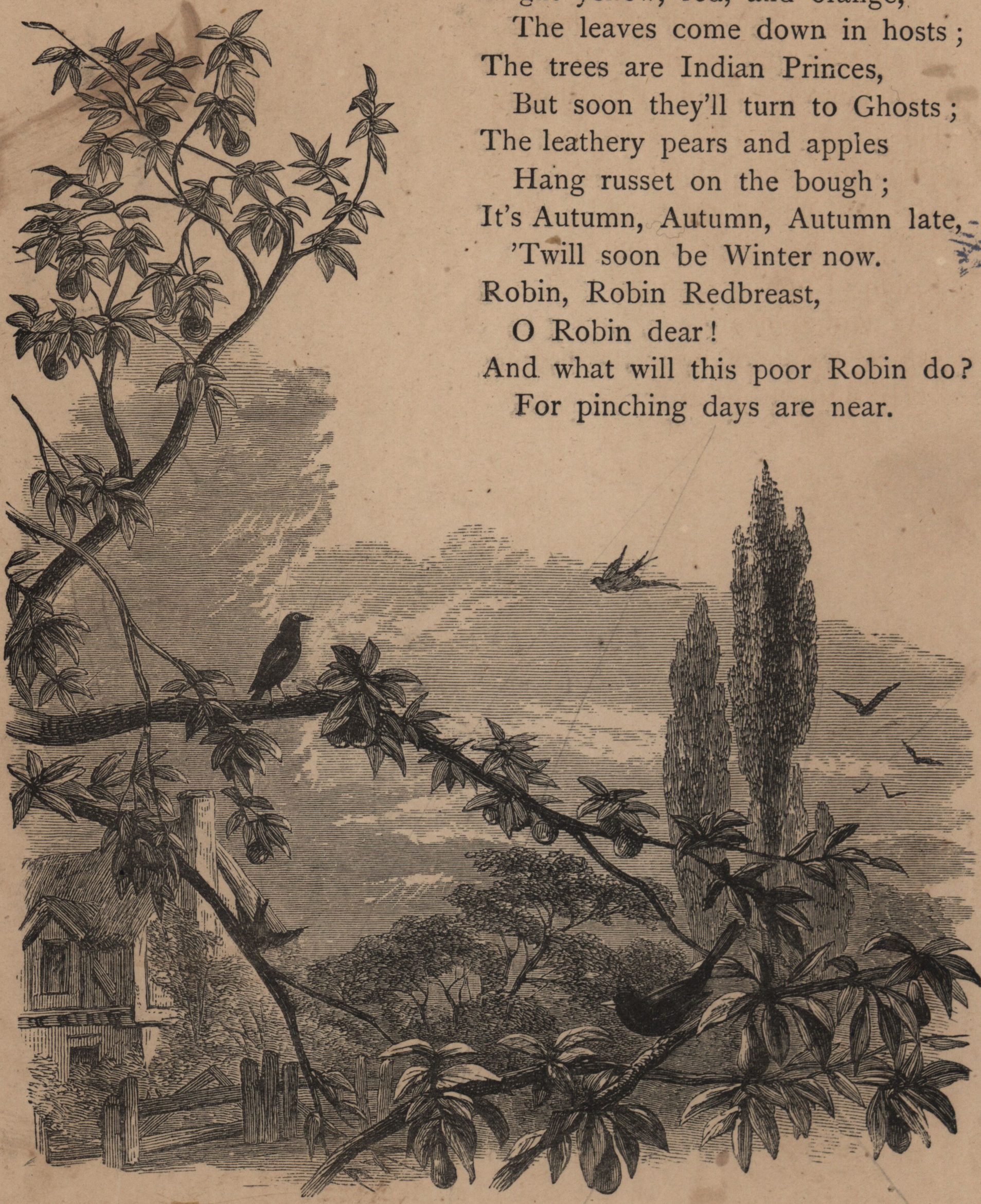
ROBIN REDBREAST.

[A CHILD'S SONG.]

GOOD-BYE, good-bye to Summer!
For Summer's nearly done;
The garden smiling faintly,
Cool breezes in the sun;
Our thrushes now are silent,
Our swallows flown away,—
But Robin's here, in coat of brown,
With ruddy breast-knot gay.
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
O Robin dear!
Robin sings so sweetly
In the falling of the year.

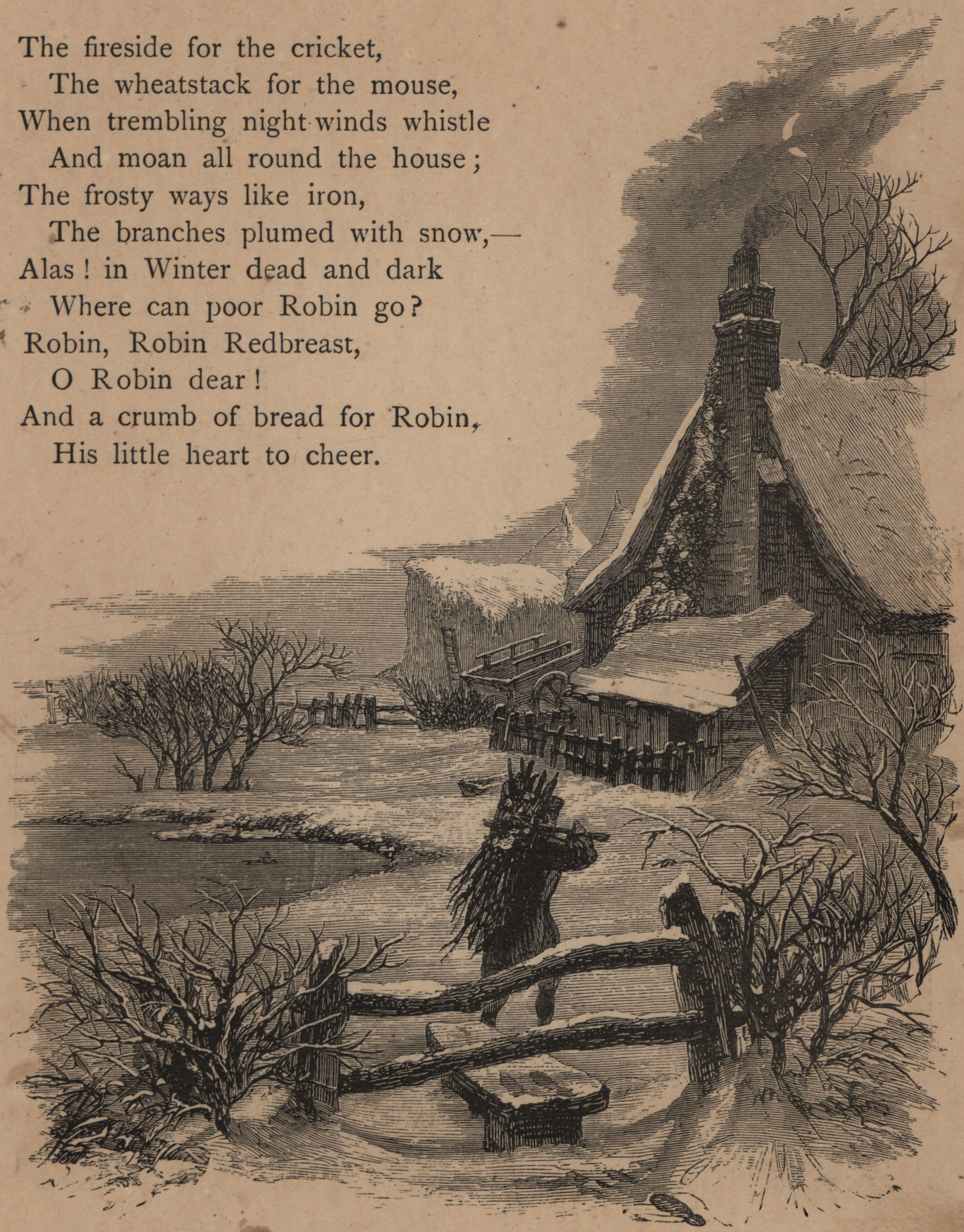
ROBIN REDBREAST.

Bright yellow, red, and orange,
The leaves come down in hosts;
The trees are Indian Princes,
But soon they'll turn to Ghosts;
The leathery pears and apples
Hang russet on the bough;
It's Autumn, Autumn, Autumn late,
'Twill soon be Winter now.
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
O Robin dear!
And what will this poor Robin do?
For pinching days are near.



ROBIN REDBREAST.

The fireside for the cricket,
  The wheatstack for the mouse,
When trembling night-winds whistle
  And moan all round the house;
The frosty ways like iron,
  The branches plumed with snow,—
Alas! in Winter dead and dark
  Where can poor Robin go?
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
  O Robin dear!
And a crumb of bread for Robin,
  His little heart to cheer.







BABY MAY.

CHEEKS as soft as July peaches,
Lips whose dewy scarlet teaches
Poppies paleness—round large eyes
Ever great with new surprise,
Minutes filled with shadeless gladness,
Minutes just as brimmed with sadness,
Happy smiles and wailing cries,
Crows and laughs and tearful eyes,
Lights and shadows swifter born
Than on wind-swept Autumn corn,
Ever some new tiny notion
Making every limb all motion—

BABY MAY.

Catching up of legs and arms,
Throwings back and small alarms,
Clutching fingers—straightening jerks,
Twining feet whose each toe works,
Kickings up and straining risings,
Mother's ever new surprisings,
Hands all wants and looks all wonder
At all things the heavens under,
Tiny scorns of smiled reprovings
That have more of love than lovings,
Mischiefs done with such a winning
Archness, that we prize such sinning,
Breakings dire of plates and glasses,
Graspings small at all that passes,
Pullings off of all that's able
To be caught from tray or table;
Silences—small meditations,
Deep as thoughts of cares for nations,
Breaking into wisest speeches
In a tongue that nothing teaches,
All the thoughts of whose possessing
Must be wooed to light by guessing;
Slumbers—such sweet angel-seemings
That we'd ever have such dreamings,
Till from sleep we see thee breaking,
And we'd always have thee waking;
Wealth for which we know no measure,
Pleasure high above all pleasure,
Gladness brimming over gladness,
Joy in care—delight in sadness,
Loveliness beyond completeness,
Sweetness distancing all sweetness,
Beauty all that beauty may be,
That's May Bennett—that's my baby!



THE HOLIDAY.

PUT by your books and slates to-day!
This is the sunny First of June,
And we will go this afternoon
Over the hills and far away.



THE HOLIDAY.

Hurrah! we'll have a holiday,
And through the wood and up the glade
We'll go, in sunshine and in shade,
Over the hills and far away.

The wild-rose blooms on every spray,
In all the sky is not a cloud,
And merry birds are singing loud,
Over the hills and far away.

Not one of us behind must stay,
But little ones and all shall go,
Where Summer breezes gently blow,
Over the hills and far away.



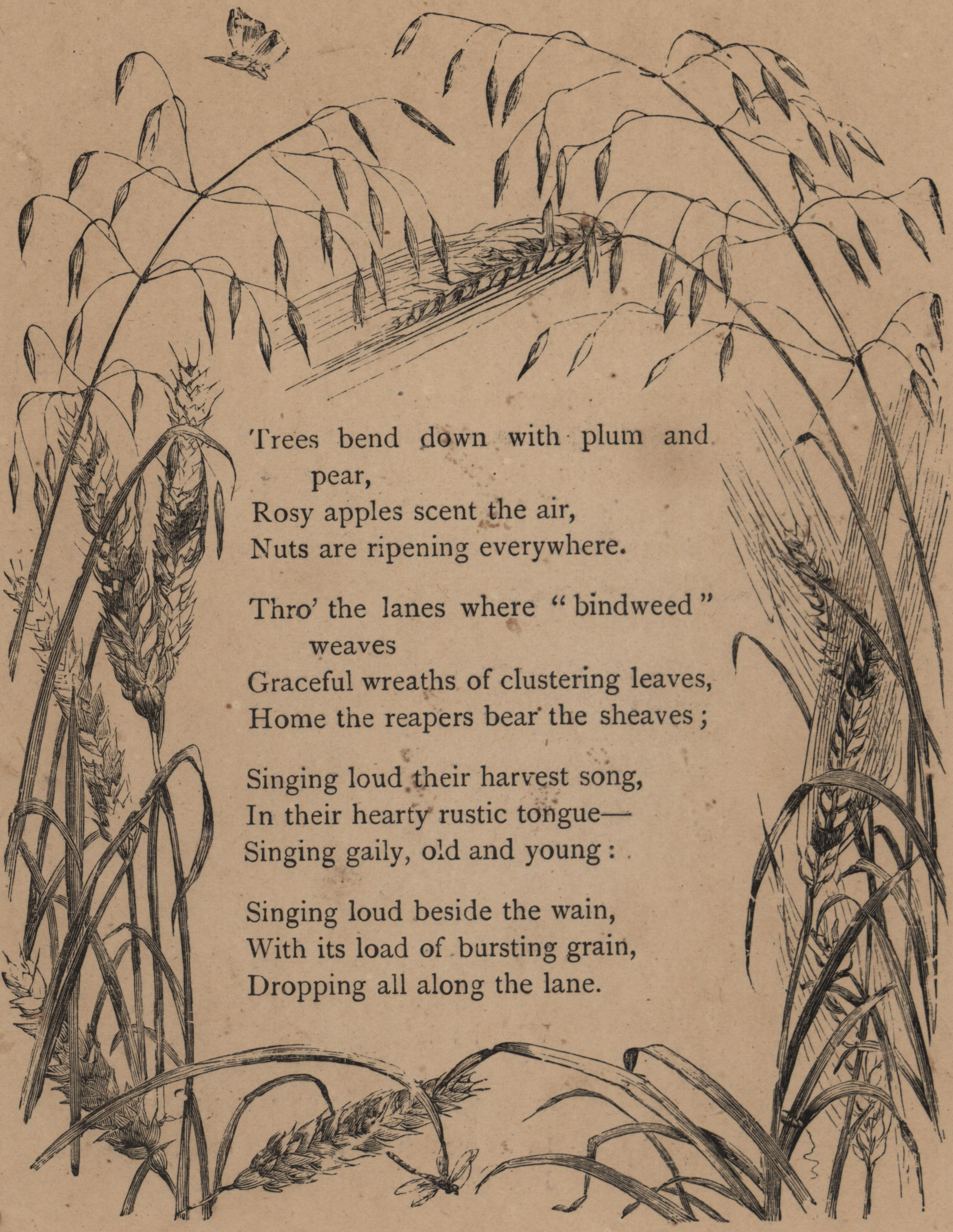


AUTUMN.

GOLDEN Autumn comes again,
With its storms of wind and rain,
With its fields of yellow grain.

Gifts for man and bird and brute,
In its wealth of luscious fruit,
In its store of precious root.

AUTUMN.



Trees bend down with plum and
pear,
Rosy apples scent the air,
Nuts are ripening everywhere.

Thro' the lanes where "bindweed"
weaves
Graceful wreaths of clustering leaves,
Home the reapers bear the sheaves;

Singing loud their harvest song,
In their hearty rustic tongue—
Singing gaily, old and young:

Singing loud beside the wain,
With its load of bursting grain,
Dropping all along the lane.

AUTUMN.

Mice and ant and squirrel fill
Now their garners at their will;
Only drones need hunger still.

Flocks of sparrows downward fly
From their hawthorn perch on high,
Pecking each one greedily.

Though the summer flowers are dead,
Still the poppy rears its head,
Flaunting gaily all in red.

Still the daisy, large and white,
Shining like a star at night,
In the hedge-row twinkles bright.

AUTUMN.

Still the "Traveller's Joy" is seen,
Snowy white, o'er leaves of green,
Glittering in its dewy sheen.

Still the foxglove's crimson bell,
And the fern-leaves in the dell,
Autumn's parting beauty tell.



LITTLE KIT.

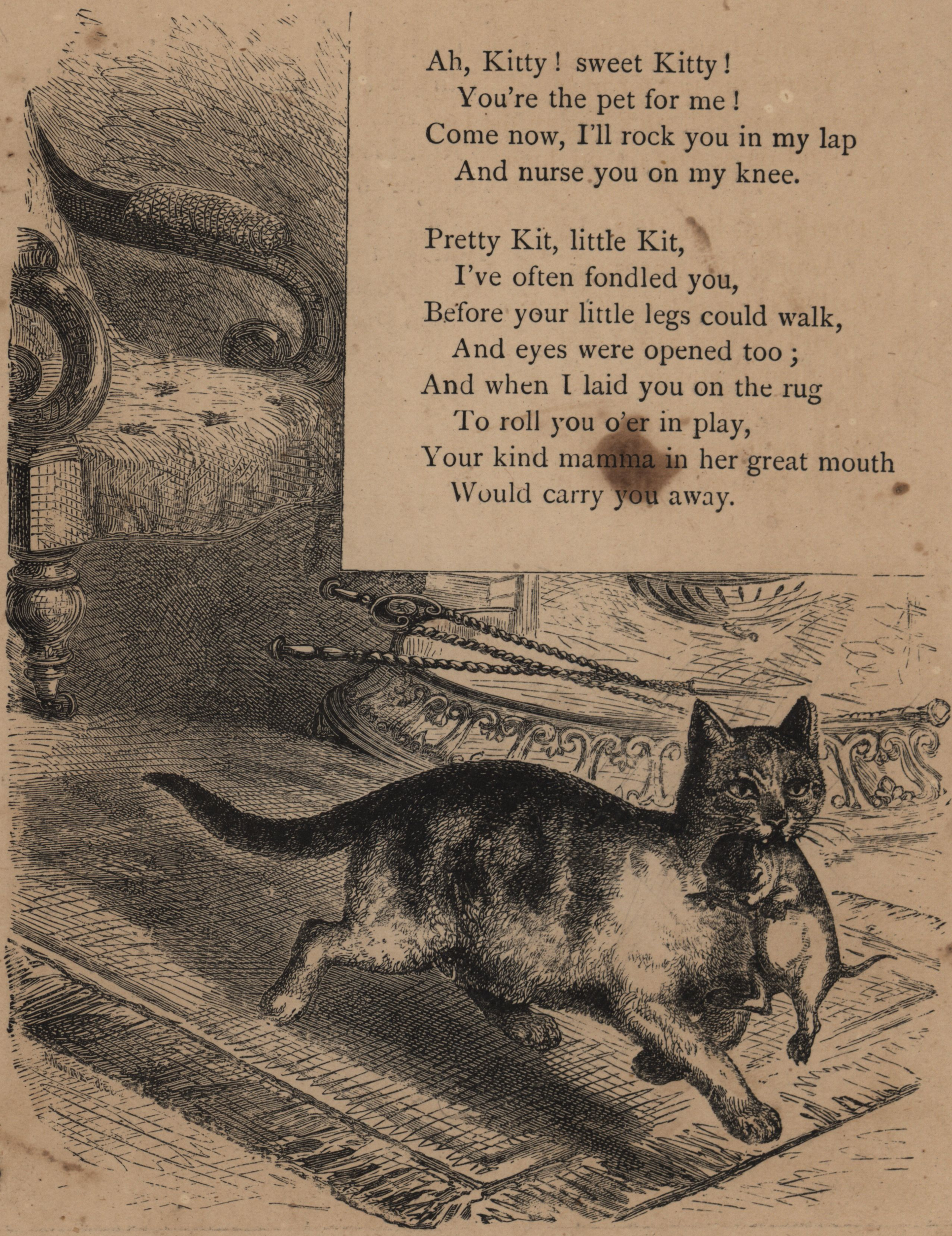
PRETTY Kit, little Kit,
Oh! you're a lovely pet!
With your sleek coat, and your white throat,
And toes as black as jet.
It's true your eye is rather green;
But then, it shines so bright,
That you could catch the naughty mouse
Who stole my cake last night.



LITTLE KIT.

Ah, Kitty! sweet Kitty!
You're the pet for me!
Come now, I'll rock you in my lap
And nurse you on my knee.

Pretty Kit, little Kit,
I've often fondled you,
Before your little legs could walk,
And eyes were opened too;
And when I laid you on the rug
To roll you o'er in play,
Your kind mamma in her great mouth
Would carry you away.



LITTLE KIT.

Ah, Kitty! sweet Kitty!
You're the pet for me!
Come now, I'll rock you in my lap
And nurse you on my knee.

Pretty Kit, little Kit,
Annie's bird can sing,
Arthur's dog can carry sticks
And Mary's parrot swing;
But though you do not carry sticks,
Or sing or swing, you are,
With your low purr, and your soft fur,
The dearest pet by far.

LITTLE KIT.

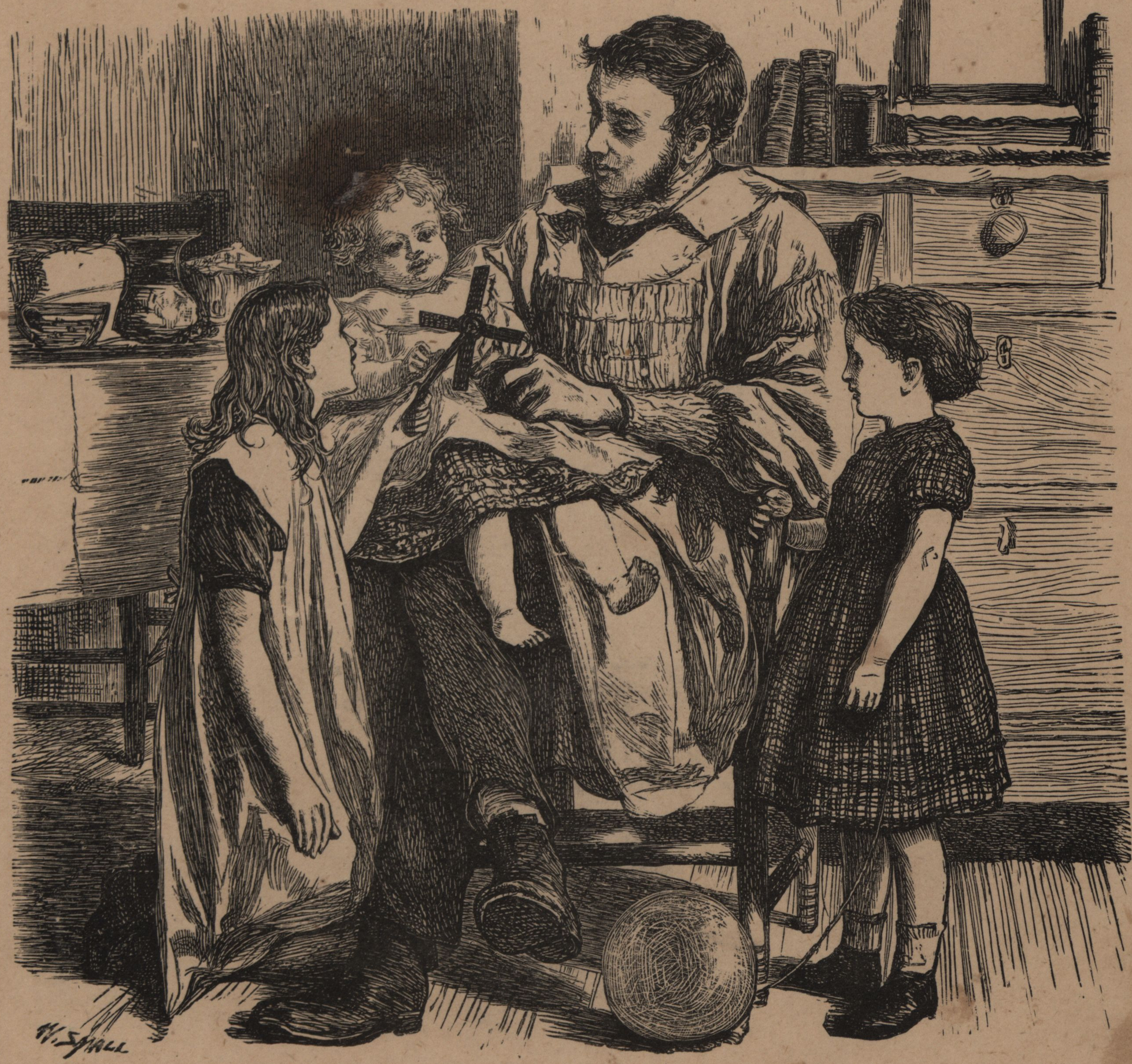
Yes, Kitty, sweet Kitty,
You're the pet for me!
Come now, I'll rock you in my lap
And nurse you on my knee.

Oh! you Kit, naughty Kit,
What is this I find!
Annie's little bird is gone,
And poll 's scratched nearly blind;
Carlo's coat is sadly torn,
Oh dear, what shall I do!
You've feathers hanging round your mouth,—
It 's all been done by you.
Fie, Kitty! fly, Kitty!
You're no pet for me!
I'll neither rock you in my lap
Nor nurse you on my knee.



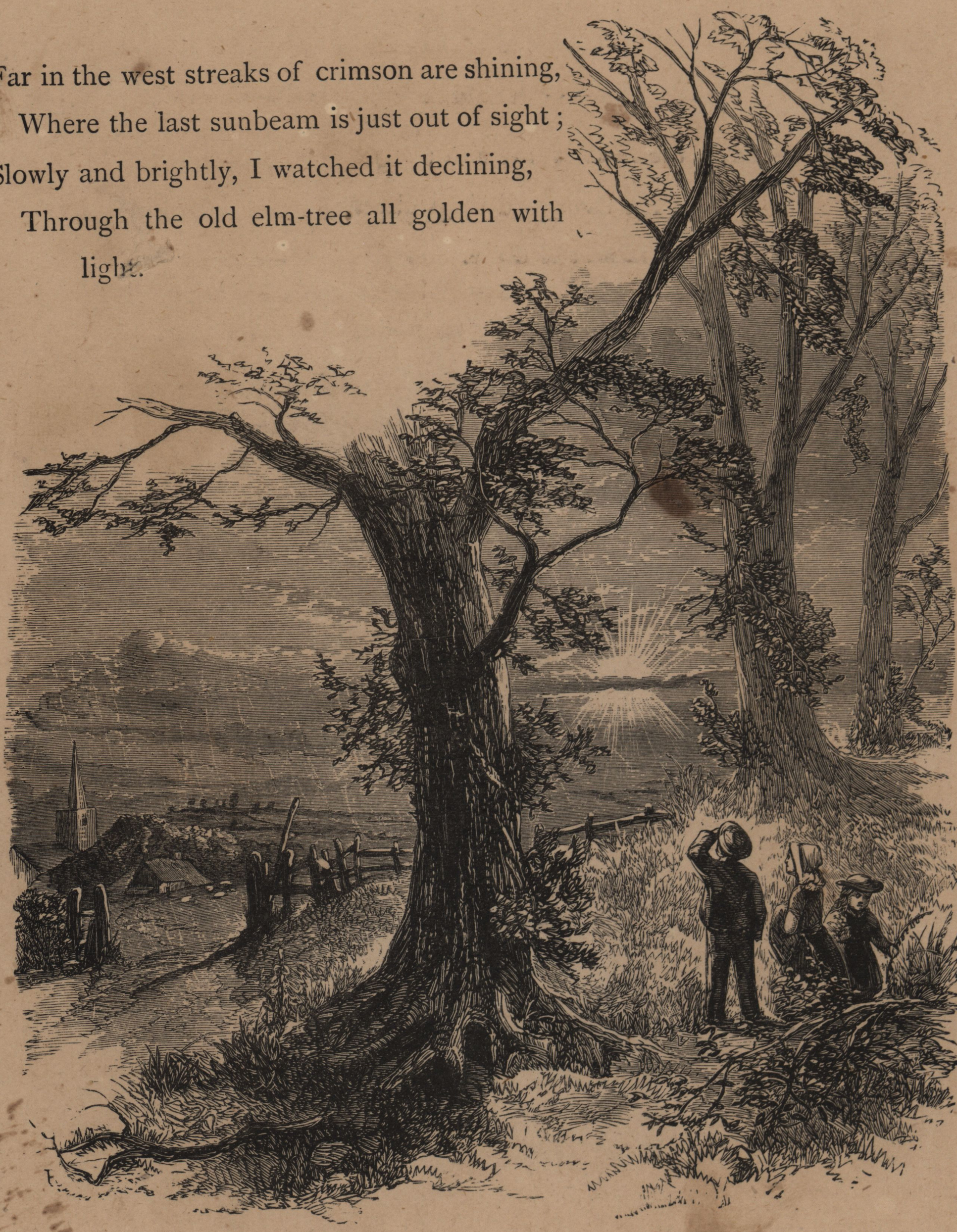
THE FATHER'S RETURN.

ALL the day long, in the cornfield so weary,
Father has toiled in the heat of the sun ;
Now the great bell from the farm-yard rings cheery,
Telling the time of his labour is done.

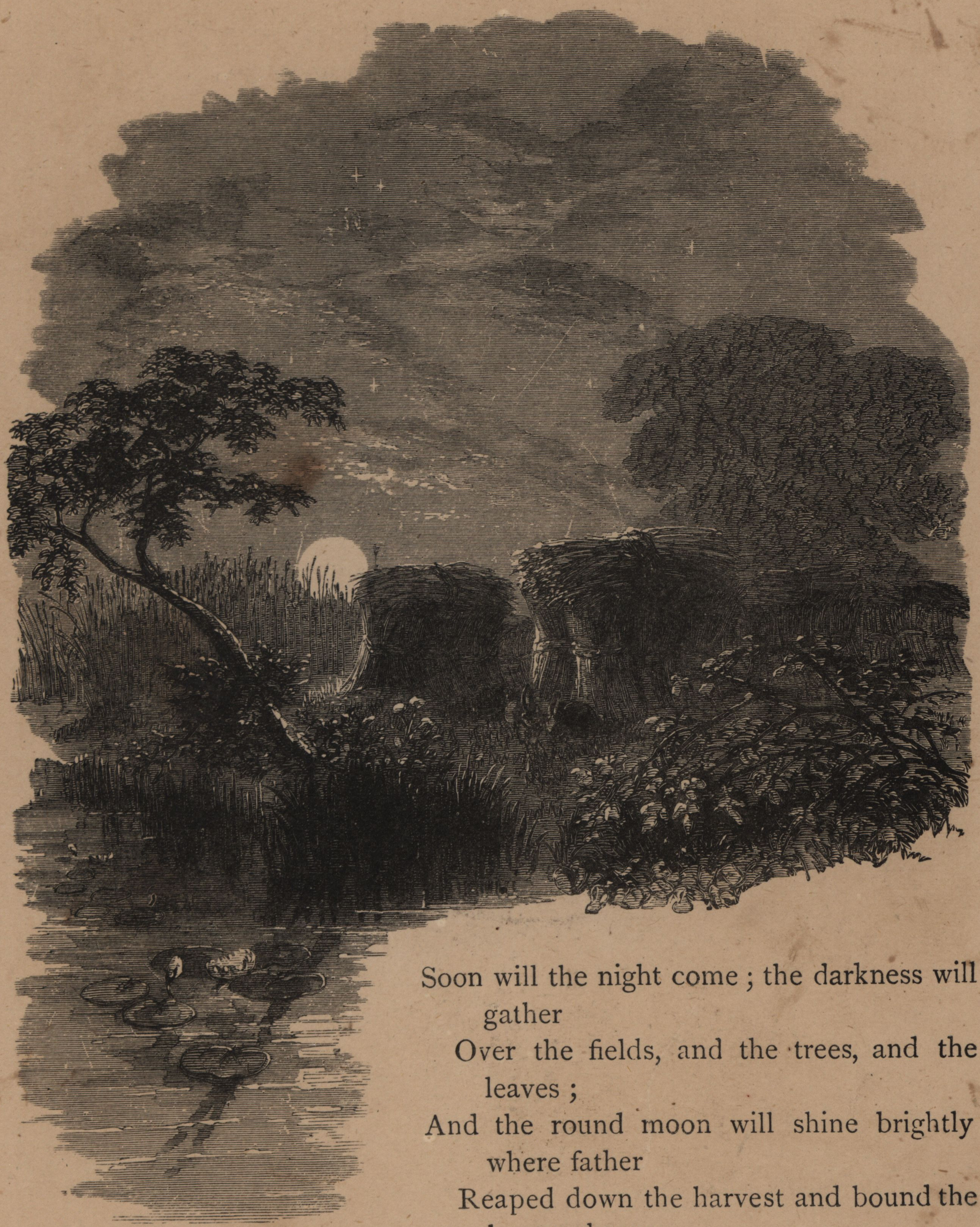


THE FATHER'S RETURN.

Far in the west streaks of crimson are shining,
Where the last sunbeam is just out of sight;
Slowly and brightly, I watched it declining,
Through the old elm-tree all golden with light.



THE FATHER'S RETURN.



Soon will the night come ; the darkness will
gather
Over the fields, and the trees, and the
leaves ;
And the round moon will shine brightly
where father
Reaped down the harvest and bound the
brown sheaves.

THE FATHER'S RETURN.

Beasts have lain down where the bright dew-drops glisten,
  Birds have gone home to their roosts long ago;
Only the bat brushes by, as I listen,
  Or the black beetle hums drowsy and slow.

Lay the white cloth for his coming, dear mother,
  Set out his chair where he likes it to be;
Close at his side you shall stand, little brother;
  Baby shall sit like a queen on his knee.

From the hard hand that has laboured so truly,
  Toiling and straining that we might have bread,
We'll take the sickle that did its work duly,
  Leave it to-night with the spade in the shed.

We'll hang around him with smiles and caresses,
  Make him forget, as we climb on his chair,
Toil that has wearied, and care that oppresses,
All but his home, and his little ones there.





BO-PEEP.

Bo-peep, bo-peep, playeth the sun,
'Mong golden clouds that go floating by,
And baby wakes all ripe for fun,
Crowing aloud that mother is nigh.
Bo-peep! bo-peep, baby!

Birdies bo-peep out of the hedge,
Linnet and sparrow, robin and wren;
Flowers bo-peep upon bank and ledge,
Happy to see the spring-time again.
Bo-peep! bo-peep, baby!

BO-PEEP.

The violet, blue like baby's eyes,
Bo-peeps up from her sly retreat,
To steal a glance at pleasant skies,
And nod to her sister primrose sweet.
Bo-peep! bo-peep, baby!

Millie bo-peeps from the curtain fold,
Mad with delight is baby boy,
And daddy is coming across the wold
To play bo-peep with his pride and joy.
Bo-peep! bo-peep, baby!





LULLABY.

LULLABY ! O lullaby !
Baby, hush that little cry !
Light is dying,
Bats are flying,
Bees to-day with work have done :
So, till comes to-morrow's sun,
Let sleep kiss those bright eyes dry !
Lullaby ! O lullaby !

LULLABY.

Lullaby ! O lullaby !
Hushed are all things far and nigh ;
Flowers are closing,
Birds reposing,
All sweet things with life have done :
Sweet, till dawns the morning sun,
Sleep then kiss those blue eyes dry !
Lullaby ! O lullaby !



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